Men-at-Arms

OSPREY PUBLISHING

World War II Soviet Armed Forces (3)

1944–45

Dr Nigel Thomas • Illustrated by Darko Pavlovic

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Men-at-Arms • 469

World War II Soviet Armed Forces (3)

1944–45

Dr Nigel Thomas • Illustrated by Darko Pavlovic
Series editor Martin Windrow

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

WORLD WAR II SOVIET ARMED FORCES (3)

1944–45

ADVANCE TO VICTORY

This volume covers the last 21 months of the Soviet Union's involvement in World War II, from 1 January 1944 – when the Red Army was poised on the eastern borders of the Baltic states and Belarus (Byelorussia), and in central Ukraine – until the Japanese surrender of 2 September 1945.

In August 1944 the Red Army crossed the 1941 Soviet border in pursuit of the depleted, but still dangerous German armed forces. The military balance shifted further against Germany as her Romanian, Bulgarian and Finnish allies fell away, leaving only Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia. Generaloberst Alfred Jodl formally surrendered German forces at Rheims, France, on 7 May 1945, with effect 8 May, but Stalin insisted on a second formal surrender in Berlin on 8 May, to take effect 9 May. Actually, hostilities did not cease in Czechoslovakia until 11 May.

The occupation of central Europe by Soviet forces brought Stalin, the all-powerful dictator of the Soviet Union, two important political opportunities. Firstly, he re-established the USSR's 1941 borders, with 15 Soviet Socialist Republics, corresponding to the Russian Empire of 1917 plus western Ukraine, but without Finland. Secondly, he exported communism by promoting communist régimes in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Yugoslavia, creating a buffer zone between the USSR and West Germany and the Western Powers. He also annexed northern East Prussia as Kaliningrad Province, awarding the south to Poland. This security structure defined the Cold War, and survived until the collapse of communism between April 1989 and the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

With secure western borders, Stalin turned to his eastern frontier. In August 1945 the Red Army helped expel Japanese forces from the Asian mainland, leading to the establishment of a communist North Korea and, in August 1949, communist China. The Soviet Union had emerged from World War II as a global superpower, able to challenge the United States until the 1990s.

About 2,000 women served as Red Army snipers, in which role they were believed to have more patience and cunning than men, but only some 500 survived the war. Roza Yegorovna Shanina is pictured here in November 1944, wearing a male-issue M43 khaki wool field shirt and a dark blue M36 woollen skirt with stockings and marching boots, and holding a Mosin-Nagant 7.62mm 1891/30g rifle with telescopic sights. She displays the gold star and orange-and-black ribbon of the Order of Glory 2nd and 3rd Class gallantry awards. The first female sniper to receive this decoration, Shanina chalked up 54 kills in Belarus, Lithuania and East Prussia before she was killed in action in East Prussia on 28 January 1945, aged only 20. (Tschakov Collection)

RED ARMY LAND FORCES

1 January 1944–2 September 1945

Stalin, as Chairman of the Communist Party and chief executive of the Soviet Union, controlled the four key government organizations promoting the war effort: the Council of People's Commissars (*Sovnarkom*), the People's Commissariat for Defence, the State

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

***General Armii* Aleksei Innokentevich Antonov, Chief of the General Staff from 17 February 1945. Here he wears the new M45 dark green general officers' parade uniform, with red 'combined arms' tunic piping, laurel-leaf collar (and cuff) embroidery, and gold 'Russian braid' shoulder boards piped red and bearing four silver rank stars (see Plate G1). Antonov was a gifted staff officer rather than a fighting general, but he still collected a fine array of decorations. Below the Soviet campaign medals on his left breast are the French Croix de Guerre and the Czechoslovak Cross of Valour, and outside them are the stars of the Soviet Order of Victory, Czechoslovak Order of the White Lion, and Polish Virtuti Militari. The decorations on his right breast include two Orders of Suvorov and the French Légion d'Honneur. (Tschakov Collection)**

Committee for Defence (GKO), and the GHQ of the Supreme High Command (*Stavka*), which controlled the Red Army General Staff.

Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza Stalin, *Stavka* Supreme High Commander (*Verkhovnnyy Glavnokomandushchiy*), had himself appointed to Generalissimo of the Soviet Union (*Generalissimus Sovetskogo Soyuza*) on 27 June 1945. Stalin's deputy was *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Georgiy K. Zhukov, assisted by the Chief of the General Staff – *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Aleksandr Vasilevskiy until 17 February 1945, thereafter *General Armii* Aleksei Antonov.

The Red Army (*Krasnaya Armiya* – KA) was divided into the Land Forces (*Sukhoputnye Voyska*) and the Air Force. It was redesignated the Soviet Army (*Sovetskaya Armiya* – SA) on 25 February 1946.

Men and women aged 18–50 served until demobilization, which began from 9 July 1945. Non-commissioned officers were appointed from the ranks. Potential officers were appointed officer cadet (*kursant*), serving at a branch-specific Military College (*Voennoe Uchilishche*) before commissioning. From 21 September 1943, boys aged 14–18, particularly war orphans, studied at a Suvorov Military College (*Suvorovkoe Voennoe Uchilishche* – SVU) before enlisting. Since 1938, non-Russian pupils earmarked for the Artillery or Air Force attended a Special Military Secondary School (*Spetsial'na Voenna Sredna Shkola*), which stressed loyalty to the multi-national Soviet state.

Land Forces branches

The land forces combat branches since 7 May 1940 were the Combined Arms Infantry, Combined Arms Cavalry, Armoured Troops, Artillery, Engineers, Signals and Technical Troops (see MAA 468 for detailed list of unit types). Additional to these were the Services, and Specialist Officers (including political officers). During the period 1944–45 the mounted cavalry declined, but artillery, combat engineering units and technical troops increased. The graduate engineering officers of the Engineer Technical Service were attached to the various branches, with dedicated Artillery and Armour Engineering services, supported by Artillery and Armour Technical services staffed by field officers and NCOs with secondary education only. The powerful political commissar was now a political officer (*Zampolit*), typically acting as deputy unit commander, but distinguished by no special badge.

ORGANIZATION OF LAND FORCES

Military Districts

Seventeen military districts existed 1 January 1944–8 May 1945: Arkhangel'sk (formed 15 December 1944), White Sea, Baltic (in exile until 9 July 1945), Byelorussian (31 December 1944), Byelorussian-Lithuanian, Kharkov, Kiev, Lvov (May 1944), Moscow, Orel, North Caucasus, Odessa (23 April 1944), South Ural (abolished June 1944), Ural (abolished June 1944, re-formed 9 July 1945), Volga, Central Asia and Siberia. The three *Fronts* (army groups) in European Russia – 1st Baltic (as Baltic District), Leningrad, and Transcaucasian – re-formed as military districts after May 1945. The 1st and 2nd Far Eastern and Transbaikal Fronts became Maritime, Far Eastern and Transbaikal Districts respectively in September 1945. Most military districts were temporarily subdivided on 9 July 1945 into 29 districts to organize demobilization, reverting to 18 districts during the Cold War period.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

January 1944: Red Army infantry in muddy snow-camouflage overalls hitch a lift on T-34 tanks, during the Leningrad-Novgorod Offensive that raised the German blockade of Leningrad and forced Army Group North back into the Baltic states. On contact with the enemy these 'tank-riders' will dismount and follow the tanks on foot. (Courtesy Central Museum of the Armed Forces, Moscow)

Strategic Directions

The Far Eastern Strategic Direction was activated 9 August–3 September 1945 for the Manchurian campaign, forming the 1st and 2nd Far Eastern and Transbaikal Fronts under *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Vasilevskiy, former Chief of General Staff.

Fronts

During 1944 the front line narrowed as the Red Army advanced westwards, and so the field armies were concentrated into 14 fronts, further reducing in May 1945 to nine plus a cavalry-mechanized group, plus three fronts for Manchuria. A *Front*, under a *general armii – general mayor*, contained strong Front HQ troops including tank and cavalry corps; anti-tank(AT)/tank destroyer, rocket-launcher, tank and engineer-sapper brigades; pontoon engineer brigades and battalions; anti-aircraft (AA) artillery and signal regiments; field armies, and 1–2 air armies. Two Baltic Fronts were downgraded to groups: Zemland (Samland) in East Prussia, and Kurlandiya (Courland) in western Latvia. Stavka also retained a Strategic Reserve (RVGK) for emergency deployment. The fronts were allocated to five operational theatres:

(1) *Northern* Six fronts: one (Karelian) in the Arctic and Karelia until November 1944, and five (Leningrad, initially Volkov, and 1st–3rd Baltic Fronts) in north-west Russia and the Baltic states.

(2) *Central* Three fronts: 1st–3rd Byelorussian, progressed through Belarus into north-eastern Germany supported by 1st Polish Army.

(3) *Southern* Four fronts: 1st–4th Ukrainian, in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Austria, south-eastern Germany and Czechoslovakia, supported by Romanian and Bulgarian armies and Yugoslav Partisans.

(4) *Caucasus* Transcaucasus Front occupied Transcaucasia (free of enemy activity since October 1943), and north-western Iran.

(5) *Far Eastern* Three fronts: Transbaikal, 1st and 2nd Far Eastern, defeated the Japanese Kwantung Army in Inner Mongolia, Manchukuo and northern Korea.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

***Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Konstantin Konstantinovich Rokossovskiy was the hero of the defence of Kursk in July 1943. As commander of 1st Byelorussian Front, during Operation 'Bagration' in June–August 1944 he expelled German Army Group Centre from Belarus, bringing the Red Army to the gates of Warsaw. Over his M43 service uniform Rokossovskiy is wearing a black leather greatcoat with gold service shoulder boards piped red, and red collar patches piped gold. After the war Rokossovskiy, who was of Polish parentage, commanded Soviet troops in Poland, and was promoted Marshal of Poland. (Courtesy Central Museum of the Armed Forces, Moscow)**

Armies and Groups

The field army (*armiya*), under a *general leytenant – general mayor*, was the basic strategic formation. There were 76 armies during this period: 53 combined arms, 11 Guards, five Shock, six Guards/Guards Tank, and one cavalry. A group (*grupa*) was a temporary formation comprising 2–3 corps, with an HQ but no HQ troops.

By 1942 there were 71 armies (numbered 1 & 2 Red Banner, 3–70 and Independent Coastal), later redesignated 'combined arms armies', many of which had been re-formed several times. However, in 1943 seven armies (9, 11, 12, 29, 41, 44, 68), and in 1944 six armies (20, 34, 54, 55, 58, 63) were permanently disbanded, and their personnel redeployed to other armies or rear area garrisons. A further five armies (24, 30, 62, 64, 66) were redesignated Guards Armies. Thus by May 1945 there were 53 combined arms armies (numbered 1–2 Red Banner, 3–8, 10, 13–19, 21–23, 25–28, 31–33, 35–40, 42, 43, 45–53, 56, 57, 59–61, 65, 67, 69,70 and Independent Coastal). A Combined Arms Army (*Obshchevoyskovaya armiya*) comprised an Army HQ with up to 14 specialist battalions, with AA divisions/ regiments, artillery divisions/ brigades/ regiments, self-propelled artillery regiments/ battalions, AT or tank destroyer brigades/ regiments, rocket-launcher regiments, mortar and signal regiments, an assault engineer-sapper brigade, tank brigades/ regiments, a tank or mechanized corps, and 3–4 rifle corps, the number and strength of these units varying widely.

Sixteen combined arms armies were awarded élite 'Guards' or 'Shock' status. A Guards Army (*Gvardeyskaya Armiya*) had extra units and better weaponry, and by May 1943 ten Guards Armies (numbered 1–8, 10 and 11) had been established, followed in December 1944 by the 9th Guards Army formed from paratroopers of the Independent Airborne Army. A Shock Army (*Udarnaya Armiya*) was also better equipped, and was deployed to spearhead attacks in key sectors; 1–5 Shock Armies had been formed by December 1942.

Six Tank Armies (numbered 1–6) were formed from May 1942. A Tank Army (*Tankovaya Armiya*) comprised from early 1944 one mechanized and two tank corps, light SP gun and artillery brigades, and rocket-launcher, motorcycle, heavy tank, armoured engineer, mine engineer, and two each AT, AA and mortar regiments. Each Tank Army was redesignated a Guards Tank Army (*Gvardeyskaya Tankovaya Armiya*) as follows: 1st, 25 April 1944; 2nd, 20 November 1944; 3rd, 14 May 1943; 4th, 18 March 1945; 5th, 25 February 1943; and 6th, 12 September 1944. Most tank armies fought with the 1st and 2nd Ukrainian Fronts.

The veteran 1st Cavalry Army (*Konarmia*) remained inactive on the Far Eastern Front. Meanwhile, cavalry corps were temporarily combined with tank or mechanized corps to form 'Cavalry-Mechanized Groups'; bearing a number or the commanding general's name, these were assigned as front or army HQ troops for specific missions. Ten such groups were formed in this period, the most important led by *General-Leytenant* Issa Pliev, formed 29 September 1944 under 2nd Ukrainian Front, and renamed 1st Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group (*1-ya Gvardeyskaya Konno-Mekhanizirovannaya Gruppa*') on 26 January 1945. This comprised mechanized, tank,

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Table 1: Red Army Fronts and Armies 1 January 1944–9 May 1945

Front	Strategic Operations	Constituent Armies
GHQ Strategic Reserve (RVGK)	As appropriate	5–7, 9, 19–22, 26, 28, 32–34, 39, 42, 47, 51, 52, 54, 61, 69, 70, Coastal, 2–4G, 11G, 2S, 5S, 2T, 4T, 1GT, 3GT, 5GT, 6–8A, 14A, 18A
Independent Armies	Various	7, 14, 37, Coastal, 4A
Northern Theatre		
Leningrad (9.5.1945 disbanded)	Leningrad-Novgorod, Vyborg-Petrozavodsk, Baltic	8, 21, 23, 42, 51, 54, 59, 67, 6G, 10G, 1S, 2S, 4S, 13A, 15A
Volkhov (15.2.1944 disbanded)	Leningrad-Novgorod	8, 54, 59, 14A
Karelian (15.11.1944 disbanded).	Vyborg-Petrozavodsk, Petsamo-Kirkenes	7, 14, 19, 26, 32, 7A
1st Baltic (24.2.1945 Zemland Group; 2.4.1945 disbanded)	Belarus, Baltic, East Prussia	39, 43, 50, 51, 61, 2G, 6G, 11G, 4S, 5GT, 3A
2nd Baltic (1.4.1945 Kurlandiya Group; 9.5.1945 disbanded)	Leningrad-Novgorod, Baltic	22, 42, 51, 1G, 6G, 10G, 1S, 3S, 4S, 14A, 15A
3rd Baltic (21.4.1944 formed; 16.10.1944 disbanded)	Baltic	42, 54, 61, 67, 1S, 14A
Central Theatre		
Byelorussian (24.2.1944 1st Byelorussian; 5.4.1944 re-formed as Byelorussian; 16.4.1944 re-formed as 1st Byelorussian; 9.5.1945 disbanded)	Belarus, Vistula-Oder, East Pomerania, Berlin	3, 8, 10, 28, 33, 47, 48, 50, 61, 63, 65, 69, 70, 8G, 3S, 5S, 1GT, 2T/GT, 6A, 16A, 1P
2nd Byelorussian (24.2.1944 formed from former North-Western Front; 5.4.1944 disbanded; 24.4.1944 re-formed; 9.5.1945 disbanded)	Dnieper-Carpathians, Belarus, East Prussia, East Pomerania, Berlin	3, 19, 33, 43, 47–50, 61, 65, 70, 2S, 5GT, 4A, 6A
Western (24.4.1944 3rd Byelorussian; 9.5.1945 disbanded)	Belarus, Baltic, East Prussia	3, 5, 10, 11, 28, 31, 33, 39, 43, 48–50, 2G, 11G, 5GT, 1A, 3A
Southern Theatre		
1st Ukrainian (11.5.1945 disbanded)	Dnieper-Carpathians, Lvov-Sandomierz, East Carpathians, Vistula-Oder, Berlin, Prague	6, 13, 18, 21, 27, 28, 31, 38, 40, 47, 52, 59, 60, 1G, 3G, 5G, 1T/GT, 2T/GT, 3GT, 4T/GT, 6T, 2A, 8A, 2P
2nd Ukrainian (11.5.1945 disbanded)	Dnieper-Carpathians, Iași-Kishinev, Belgrade, Budapest, West Carpathians, Vienna, Prague	27, 37, 40, 46, 52, 53, 57, 4G, 5G, 7G, 9G, 2T, 6T, 5GT, 6GT, CM/GCM, 5A, 1R, 4R
3rd Ukrainian (9.5.1945 disbanded)	Dnieper-Carpathians, Iași-Kishinev, Belgrade, Budapest, Vienna	6, 26–28, 37, 46, 57, 4G, 8G, 9G, 5S, 6GT, 17A, 1B
4th Ukrainian (31.5.1944 disbanded; 5.8.1944 re-formed; 11.5.1945 disbanded)	Dnieper-Carpathians, Crimea, East Carpathians, West Carpathians, Prague	18, 28, 38, 51, 60, Coastal, 1–3G, 5S, 8A, CC
Caucasus Theatre		
Transcaucasus (25.8.1945 disbanded)	-	4, 45
Far Eastern Theatre 1 January 1944–2 September 1945		
Transbaikal (9.8.1945; 3.9.1945 disbanded)	Manchuria	17, 36, 39, 53, 6GT, CM, 12A
Maritime Group (9.8.1945 1st Far Eastern Front; 3.9.1945 disbanded)	Manchuria	1RB, 5, 25, 35, 9–11A 9A
Far Eastern Front (9.8.1945 2nd Far Eastern Front; 3.9.1945 disbanded)	Manchuria	1RB, 2RB, 15, 16, 25, 35, 9–11A 10A

Abbreviations: A = Air Army; B = Bulgarian Army; CC = Czechoslovak Corps; CM = Cavalry-Mechanized Group; G = Guards Army; GCM = Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group; GT = Guards Tank Army; P = Polish Army; RB = Red Banner Army; R = Romanian Army; S = Shock Army; T = Tank Army.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

August 1944: German prisoners of war captured during Operation 'Bagration' are paraded through Red Square in Moscow, guarded by NKVD Internal Troops. By May 1945 about 3.3 million Germans had been taken prisoner by the Red Army, and of these, some 356,000 died in captivity. In October 1949 the Soviet Union still held 85,000 POWs; the last were not repatriated until 7 October 1955, following an appeal by the West German chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, during his visit to Moscow the previous month. (Author's collection)

and Guards Cavalry corps. For the Manchurian campaign, *General-Polkovnik* Pliev re-formed the group as the 'Soviet Mongolian Cavalry-Mechanized Group' in August 1945, with four Mongolian cavalry divisions, five Soviet brigades and supporting regiments.

Foreign formations contributed substantial manpower to the Red Army. These comprised 1st Czechoslovak Corps (5 brigades) from April 1944; 1st Polish Army (4 divisions) from July 1944; 2nd Polish Army (4 divisions) from January 1945; 1st Romanian (6 divisions) and 4th Romanian (9 divisions) armies, and 1st Bulgarian Army (6 divisions) from September 1944.

Corps: Rifles and Mountain

Corps and divisions underwent rapid reorganization 1942–43 as the Red Army contained the Axis threat and then re-equipped for counterattacks, but from January 1944 the situation had stabilized. 244 corps were operational: 135 Rifle, 41 Guards Rifle, 25 Tank, 12 Guards Tank, 6 Mechanized, 8 Guards Mechanized, one Cavalry, 7 Guards Cavalry, and 9 Breakthrough Artillery.

The Rifle Corps was gradually reintroduced from April 1942 as an intermediate headquarters between a field army HQ and the divisions. A 26,500-strong M42 Rifle Corps (*Strelkoviy Korpus*), under a *general-mayor*, usually comprised Corps HQ units with engineer, signals, medical and machine-gun battalions and a reconnaissance company; a field artillery regiment, later expanded to a two-regiment brigade; and three rifle divisions or naval infantry brigades. 135 Rifle Corps were formed: 121 (numbered 1–101, 103–119, & 121–123) between 27 April 1942 and 6 December 1943, and 14 (102, 120, 124–135) between 12 January and 1 September 1944. A Guards Rifle Corps (*Gvardeyskiy Strelkoviy Korpus*) contained at least one Guards Rifle division; 41 such corps were formed: 37 (numbered 1–36, 40) between 27 September 1941 and 31 December 1943, and three (37–39) between 1 January and 1 September 1944. 8th Rifle Corps was renumbered 41st Guards Rifle Corps on 28 June 1945.

The 3rd Rifle Corps was redesignated 3rd Mountain Rifle Corps (*3-y Gorno-strelkoviy Korpus*) on 21 June 1943, with three mountain divisions. 1st and 2nd Light Rifle Corps were formed 27 February 1944, redesignated on 8 March as Light Mountain Rifle Corps, and served in Karelia until May 1945. A Light Infantry Corps (*Legkostrelkoviy Korpus*) had 2–3 naval infantry brigades or ski battalions, while a Light Mountain Rifle Corps (*Legkiy Gorno-strelkoviy Korpus*) comprised 2–3 naval infantry or mountain rifle brigades.

Corps: Tank and Mechanized

Tank, mechanized and cavalry corps were assigned independently to Front, Combined Arms Army and Guards Army HQs to form Tank and Guards Tank Armies or Cavalry-Mechanized Groups. An M44 Tank Corps (*Tankoviy Korpus*), a strengthened M42 corps, had 10,980 personnel in one motorized rifle and three tank brigades; heavy, medium and light SP gun regiments (21 vehicles each); light artillery (formed August 1944), AA, AT

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

and mortar regiments; and motorcycle and armoured car reconnaissance, rocket-launcher (8 launchers), engineer, signals and supply battalions. The 4,653-man Motorized Rifle Brigade (*Motostrelkoya Brigada*) and the 1,038-strong Tank Brigade (*Tankovaya Brigada*) retained the M42 and M43 organizations respectively (see MAA 468).

During 1942–43, 31 Tank Corps (numbered 1–31) were formed, but by November 1944 disbandments or redesignations as Guards Tank Corps reduced them to 25 (numbered 1, 3–13, 17–20, 22–25, & 27–31). A Guards Tank Corps (*Gvardeyskiy Tankoviy Korpus*) comprised Guards tank and motor-rifle brigades, and 11 had formed by 1943 (numbered 1–8, 10–12), followed by 9th Guards Rifle Corps (formerly 3rd Tank Corps) in November 1944.

Mechanized Corps combined tanks, mechanized infantry and SP guns, and originally replaced the M42 Tank Corps. The M44 Mechanized Corps (*Mekhanizyrovanniy Korpus*) had 16,370 personnel, increased to 16,438 in May 1945. It was organized in Corps HQ Troops including AT, AA, mortar and two SP gun regiments; motorcycle reconnaissance, AT, rocket-launcher, engineer and signals battalions; one M43 tank, and three M43 mechanized brigades. The 30 mechanized corps formed in 1940–41 had been disbanded or redesignated as Guards corps. They had been outperformed by the M44 Tank Corps, and August 1944 only six remained (numbered 1, 5, 7–10). A Guards Mechanized Corps (*Gvardeyskiy Mekhanizyrovanniy Korpus*) contained Guards brigades exclusively; eight (numbered 1–8) had been formed in 1942–43, followed by 9th Guards Mechanized Corps (formerly 3rd Mechanized Corps) in July 1944.

A cheerful female traffic controller (*regulirovshchitsa*), wearing an M42 dark grey fleece cap and a fur-lined leather coat, uses her red and yellow signal flags to direct Red Army supply lorries across the Polish-German border. The fingerpost behind her triumphantly indicates that there are only 165km (102 miles) to go before reaching Berlin, while Moscow is 1,535km (954 miles) behind. Below this is a sign for a first-aid post, and beyond it one warning Soviet troops to exercise caution on entering German territory. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

January 1945: an ISU-152 self-propelled gun, its powerful 15.2cm ML-20S armament a match for even German King Tiger tanks, passes two horsedrawn supply wagons in a captured east German town from which the civilian population appear to have fled. The crewmen are wearing M34 padded tank helmets or M40 fleece caps, with M43 padded canvas overjackets; the infantrymen by the roadside are wearing M41 *telogreika* quilted jackets over their winter field uniforms. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

February 1945: a Motor Rifles unit advances cautiously through the muddy countryside of eastern Germany in February 1945, mounted in US Lend-Lease M2 half-tracks; '*Vlered na Berlin!*' ('Forward to Berlin!') is painted at the top of the armoured radiator louvres. The commander (left, with binoculars) wears a light grey M40 *shapka-ushanka* fleece cap, and an M31 sheepskin-lined coat; his men have M42 dark grey fleece caps, and M41 khaki greatcoats with M43 field shoulder boards and collar patches. (Tschakov Collection)

Cavalry and Artillery

Nineteen cavalry corps (numbered 1–19) were formed between December 1941 and February 1943, but by August 1943 all except 15th Cavalry Corps – under 4th Army HQ in Transcaucasia – had been disbanded or redesignated as Guards. A Guards Cavalry Corps (*Gvardeyskiy Kavaleriyskiy Korpus*) followed the M42 organization but with three Guards cavalry divisions. Seven Guards corps had formed between November 1941 and February 1943 (numbered 1–7), including 4th Kuban Cossack Corps and 5th Don Cossack Corps.

By late 1944 there were nine Breakthrough Artillery Corps (numbered 2–10), assigned as Front or Army HQ troops to control breakthrough artillery and artillery divisions. Five corps (3, 4, 6–8) were used to devastating effect in Berlin in April 1945. A Breakthrough Artillery Corps (*Artilleriyskiy Korpus Proryva*) usually comprised three rocket-launcher brigades and three breakthrough artillery divisions.

The Anti-Aircraft Defence organization (*Protivovozdushnaya Oborona* – PVO) controlled 79 M43 Anti-Aircraft Divisions, each division (*Zetnaya Artilleriyskaya Diviziya*) having only 1,973 men, supported by Barrage Balloon Divisions, a division (*Diviziya Aerostatov Zagrazhdenita*) containing a number of balloon detachments.

Divisions: Rifle

During this period 679 divisions of all types were operational, usually under a *general-mayor* or *polkovnik*; many underwent second and third formations.

The M43 (August) Rifle Division, introduced 22 August 1943, had 9,380 personnel. Divisional HQ troops comprised NKVD security platoons, reconnaissance and signal companies, AT and two-company engineer battalions, three 2,017-strong rifle regiments and a field artillery regiment. A rifle regiment had an HQ with HQ units (mounted and infantry reconnaissance, engineer and chemical platoons), signal, sub-machine gun, AT rifle, medical and supply companies, AT and infantry-gun batteries, a veterinary hospital, ordnance and transport workshops, and three rifle battalions. Each battalion had AT rifle, AT, medical and supply platoons, two-platoon machine-gun and mortar companies, and three rifle companies; a company comprised medical and machine-gun sections and three rifle platoons, each platoon with three 11-man sections. A field artillery regiment had an HQ, HQ battery, and two artillery battalions, each with an HQ, survey, signal, ammunition and supply platoons, and one field howitzer and two field gun batteries.

To retain the number of rifle divisions, manpower was allowed to decline throughout 1944. Divisions reduced to 7,189 personnel lost the regimental mounted reconnaissance platoons, battalion MG and mortar companies were reduced in size, and rifle company mortar platoons and the third sections of rifle platoons were disbanded. A 6,245-strong division reduced the divisional AT battery, and rifle companies lost their third rifle platoon, while a 5,327-strong division had three two-battalion regiments but with three-platoon rifle companies. The smallest configuration, a 4,400-strong

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Infantrymen cautiously enter the Frankfurter Allee U-Bahn station in east-central Berlin, ready to flush out anyone still offering resistance; there was heavy fighting in some of Berlin's underground railway tunnels. The soldiers wear sidecaps and M43 light khaki cotton summer field uniforms; the man at the foot of the steps (second left) seems to be brandishing an entrenching tool – a formidable weapon in close combat. The notice above the station entrance directs German civilians to a nearby public air raid shelter. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

division (effectively a brigade), had only three two-battalion regiments with two companies per battalion, a company having two platoons. On 25 October 1944 the divisional engineer battalion expanded to three companies, and the signal company to a small signal battalion.

The M44 Rifle Division organization, ordered 18 December 1944, was rare in Europe but more common from June 1945 in Manchuria. It expanded divisional strength to 11,706, and replaced the regimental AT rifle company with an AA machine-gun platoon and a second sub-machine gun company. The divisional AA battalion was restored, and the field artillery regiment expanded to a brigade with field-gun, howitzer and mortar regiments, each regiment having five batteries in two battalions.

The number of rifle divisions increased during this period, through the conversion of eight mountain rifle (20, 28, 47, 58, 79, 173, 192 & 194) and two motorized divisions (101 & 210), and a policy of re-forming all disbanded divisions (except for some 400-series examples) and allowing understrength divisions. Thus 407 rifle divisions existed (numbered 1–35, 37–56, 59–67, 69–241, 243–317, 319–400, 402, 404, 406, 407, 409, 413–417 & 418–420).

The Guards Rifle Division (*Gvardeyskaya Strelkovaya Diviziya*) was later allocated more firepower; from December 1942 it had two regimental sub-machine gun companies, a full-strength third artillery battalion, rifle battalion AT rifle companies, and company machine-gun platoons. An M44 Guards Rifle Division replaced the AT battalion with an SP gun battalion. All these modifications were eventually applied (at least on paper) to rifle divisions by June 1945. Guards rifle divisions increased from 98 in December 1944 to 122 (numbered 1–122) in June 1945, either as new divisions or redesignated rifle, mountain rifle or airborne divisions.

Mountain rifle divisions, intended for Transcaucasia, were surplus to requirements after 1943. Thus the 11 divisions existing in January 1944 (numbered 20, 28, 47, 58, 68, 79, 173, 192, 194, 242 & 318) had reduced by May 1945 to three divisions – 68, 242 & 318 – plus 128th Guards Mountain Rifle Division (*128-ya Gvardeyskaya Gorno-strelkovaya Diviziya*). An M43 Mountain Rifle Division comprised AA, engineer, signal, ammunition supply and medical battalions; motor transport and mounted

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Berlin, 30 April 1945: infantrymen of the 756th Rifle Regt, 150th Rifle Division, proudly secure a Soviet flag over the Reichstag parliament building. Both wear sidecaps, and M41 *telogreika* quilted jackets over their M43 khaki field shirts. (Tschakov Collection)

reconnaissance companies; an AT battery, two-battalion howitzer and mountain artillery regiments; and four two-battalion mountain rifle regiments. Six mountain infantry brigades (numbered 3, 31, 32, 69, 70 & 72) were formed in January 1945 for the two light mountain rifle corps.

Divisions: Tank and Motorized

The four tank and motorized divisions remaining in January 1944 were reassigned to the Far East, serving under the Transbaikal Front until September 1945. The M41 Tank Division (*Tankovaya Diviziya*) was obsolete, and by 1942 all tank divisions except 61st and 111th had re-formed into tank corps and brigades. The M41 Motorized Division (*Motostrelkovaya Diviziya*) and the Guards Motorized Division (*Gvardeyskaya* prefix) organizations were also disbanded, leaving only the 36th and 57th Motorized Divisions.

Divisions: Cavalry

The 6,000-strong M43 Cavalry Division (*Kavaleriyskaya Diviziya*) organization, introduced 6 February 1943, remained in existence until September 1945. Nine cavalry divisions (numbered 1, 8, 23, 30, 32, 39, 59, 63 & 84) operated between January 1944 and May 1945. A Guards Cavalry Division (*Gvardeyskaya Kavaleriyskaya Diviziya*) was organized like a cavalry division, and 17 of these (numbered 1–17) served. They and seven cavalry divisions were assigned in threes to the one cavalry and seven Guards cavalry corps, while 59th and 84th divisions were independent formations. There were six Cossack Guards cavalry divisions: 3rd, 9th and 10th Kuban, 11th and 12th Don, and 4th Terek.

Divisions: Artillery

The regiment-sized M44 Anti-Aircraft Division (*Zenitnaya Artilleriyskaya Diviziya*) and Guards AA Division (*Gvardeyskaya* prefix) had 2,280 personnel in: 134-strong divisional HQ; three 518-strong AA regiments, each with four 6-gun AA batteries and two AA MG companies; a 490-strong heavy AA regiment with four AA guns; and 102 men in maintenance units. There were 73 AA divisions (numbered 2–15, 17–74 & 76), and six Guards AA divisions numbered 1–6. Of these, 60 AA divisions and five Guards AA divisions served singly or in pairs as Front or Army HQ troops, while 16 divisions (numbered 50–63 and 1st Guards) were assigned to the Special Moscow PVO Army defending the capital.

An M42 Artillery Division (*Artilleriyskaya Diviziya*), modified 6 December 1942, and a Guards Artillery Division (*Gvardeyskaya* prefix), introduced 1 March 1943, had 9,214 personnel in a survey battalion, and light, howitzer, gun-howitzer and mortar brigades. The 27 artillery divisions formed were numbered 1–27, and five Guards divisions were numbered 1–5. From April 1943 most were converted to Breakthrough Artillery divisions, leaving in January 1944 only 11 artillery divisions (numbered 2, 10, 11, 14, 22, 24, 26, 27, and 1, 2 & 5 Guards). Seven of these subsequently became breakthrough divisions, leaving in May 1945 only five divisions, numbered 10, 11, 17 (a reconversion of a breakthrough division), 26 and 27.

Three heavy artillery divisions were also formed. 4th Guards Artillery Division became a 5,063-strong Guards Heavy Gun Artillery Division (*Gvardeyskaya Tyazhelaya Pushechnnaya Artilleriyskaya Diviziya*), later joined by a newly formed 6th Guards Division; both had a survey battalion and

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

four gun-howitzer brigades. The 8th Gun Artillery Division (*Pushechnnaya Artilleriyskaya diviziya*) was formed in October 1943, with four mixed light gun-howitzer brigades. All types of artillery division were deployed as Front or Army HQ troops.

The M43 Breakthrough Artillery Division (*Artilleriyskaya Diviziya Proryva*) and a Guards Breakthrough Artillery Division (*Gvardeyskaya* prefix), formed April 1943, had a survey battalion, and light, howitzer, gun-howitzer, heavy howitzer, super-heavy howitzer and mortar brigades, strengthened in September 1944 by replacing the gun-howitzer brigade with a heavy mortar brigade and adding a rocket-launcher brigade. In January 1944 there were 15 breakthrough divisions (numbered 3, 5–7, 9, 12, 13, 15–17, 20, 21, 23 & 25), and four Guards breakthrough divisions(numbered 1–3 and 5). By May 1945 conversion of seven artillery divisions, five new formations and the loss of 17th Division had increased this formidable artillery force to 26 breakthrough divisions (numbered 1–7, 9, 10, 12–16, 18–25, 28–31, and 1–3, 5 & 6 Guards).

The M42 Guards Mortar Division (*Gvardeyskaya Minometnya Diviziziya*) was actually a rocket-launcher division firing *Katyusha* rockets from lorry-mounted launchers. The original seven divisions (numbered 1–7) were retained and deployed as Front or Army HQ troops.

2 May 1945: a group of Red Army infantry photographed following the fall of Berlin. All wear SSh-40 helmets, M43 khaki woollen field shirts and vatnie sharovari breeches with boots. The three officers (foreground, front row) are recognizable by their field shirt breast pockets, and the cross braces fitted to their belts; only one (third from left) has retained his M35 officers' service belt with the distinctive star buckle, and the others have enlisted men's belts. The officers and the NCO (far right) carry PPS-43 or PPSh-41 sub-machine guns, while the other enlisted men have M1891 bolt-action rifles. (Tschakov Collection)

Partisans

About 374,000 Soviet partisan forces under NKVD command operated, particularly in Belarus. They supported the Red Army during Operation 'Bagration', and were unofficially designated the '4th Byelorussian Front'. After the liberation of Belarus in August 1944 these Soviet partisans fought anti-Soviet partisans in western Byelorussia, north-west Ukraine and the Baltic states. There were also Soviet partisan units in Czechoslovakia, and deserters from German-raised 'Eastern Battalions' joined the French Resistance.

SUMMARY OF LAND FORCES CAMPAIGNS

North

This theatre became more active in 1944, as the Red Army defeated German-Finnish forces in Karelia and re-occupied the Baltic states.

Leningrad-Novgorod Offensive, 14 January–1 March 1944. Leningrad, Volkhov and 2nd Baltic Fronts advanced 150 miles thorugh north-western Russia against the German Army Group North, finally lifting the 900-day siege of Leningrad, and threatening the Baltic states.

Vyborg-Petrozavodsk Offensive, 10 June–9 August 1944. Leningrad and Karelian Fronts advanced 150 miles against the German and Finnish forces, crossing the Finnish border and forcing Finland to seek an armistice.

Baltic Offensive, 14 September–24 November 1944. Leningrad, 1st–3rd Baltic and 3rd Byelorussian Fronts advanced 180 miles, occupying most of the Baltic states and trapping Army Group North in the Courland Pocket in western Latvia.

Petsamo-Kirkenes Offensive, 7–29 October 1944. Karelian Front advanced 100 miles, forcing German forces into northern Norway.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Bored crewmen from an IS-2 heavy tank unit listen to a political lecture in a comparatively undamaged Berlin street in May 1945. They wear M34 padded tank helmets, and M34 black leather jackets without shoulder boards, over M35 blue tank overalls tucked into marching boots. (Tschakov Collection)

A unit of Red Army infantry march cautiously, with weapons at the ready and their flag furled, through the village of Weissenfels, south-west of Leipzig in eastern Germany. The subaltern officer at the head, apparently with a bandaged right hand, wears an M43 service tunic and carries a map case; the other officers and men wear M43 woollen field shirts. The German civilian onlookers are unaware that the Soviet occupation will last 44 years. (Nik Cornish@Stavka)

Centre

This was the crucial theatre, where the Red Army broke the German line and advanced to occupy first Poland, then north-east Germany and Berlin.

Byelorussian Offensive, 23 June–29 August 1944 (Operation 'Bagration'). After almost nine months of relative inactivity, some 2.3 million Soviet troops in 1st Baltic and 2nd and 3rd Byelorussian Fronts, plus Polish forces, inflicted the greatest German defeat of the war on Army Group Centre, forcing it back 400 miles out of Belarus and eastern Poland. However, they halted before Warsaw, allowing the Germans to crush the Warsaw Uprising by the Polish Home Army.

Vistula-Oder Offensive, 12 January–3 February 1945. In a huge follow-up operation, 1st Byelorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts plus Polish forces advanced 300 miles against German Army Group 'A', occupying the rest of Poland and the German border regions up to the River Oder.

East Prussia Offensive, 13 January–25 April 1945. 2nd and 3rd Byelorussian and 1st Baltic Fronts advanced 120 miles, occupying East Prussia.

East Pomerania Offensive, 10 February–4 April 1945. 2nd and 1st Byelorussian Fronts and Polish forces advanced 100 miles north, occupying German East Pomerania.

Berlin Offensive, 16 April–8 May 1945. 2nd and 1st Byelorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts plus Polish forces advanced 140 miles against Army Group Vistula and Army Group 'A', finally occupying Berlin, and meeting United States forces on the River Elbe.

South

The Red Army advanced through Ukraine, south-eastern Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and into Austria and south-eastern Germany.

Dnieper-Carpathian Offensive, 24 December 1943–17 April 1944. 1st–4th Ukrainian and 2nd Byelorussian Fronts advanced 280 miles against Army Group South, liberating western Ukraine and entering south-eastern Poland and Romanian Moldova.

Crimea Offensive, 8 April–12 May 1944. 4th Ukrainian Front advanced 160 miles, expelling Army Group 'A' from the Crimea.

Lvov-Sandomierz Offensive 13 July–29 August 1944. 1st Ukrainian Front advanced 220 miles against Army Group North Ukraine, occupying south-eastern Poland.

Iasi-Kishinev Offensive 20–29 August 1944. 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts advanced 200 miles against Army Group South Ukraine and Romanian forces, occupying Moldova and forcing the Romanian armistice.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

East Carpathian Offensive, 8 September–28 October 1944. 1st and 4th Ukrainian Fronts and Czechoslovak forces advanced 70 miles against Army Group Heinrici, entering eastern Czechoslovakia through the Dukla Pass.

Belgrade Offensive 28 September–20 October 1944. 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts, Yugoslav Partisans and Bulgarian forces advanced 120 miles, liberating parts of eastern Yugoslavia and occupying Belgrade, threatening German forces retreating from Greece and Albania.

Budapest Offensive, 29 October 1944–13 February 1945. 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts and Romanian forces advanced 250 miles against Army Group South, occupying eastern Hungary and capturing Budapest.

West Carpathian Offensive, 12 January–18 February 1945. 2nd and 4th Ukrainian Fronts and Romanian and Czechoslovak forces advanced 140 miles against Army Group South, occupying Slovakia, southern Poland and south-eastern Germany.

Vienna Offensive, 16 March–15 April 1945. 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts and Bulgarian forces advanced 150 miles against Army Group South, occupying Vienna and eastern Austria, and supporting Yugoslav Partisans in northern Yugoslavia.

Prague Offensive, 6–11 May 1945. 1st, 2nd and 4th Ukrainan Fronts, supported by Polish, Romanian and Czechoslovak forces, advanced 120 miles against Army Group Centre, liberating Bohemia-Moravia (now Czech Republic) and taking Prague three days after VE-Day, meeting Gen Patton's 3rd US Army at Pilsen.

Infantrymen, probably from a Guards reconnaissance unit of the 2nd Far Eastern Front, occupy Harbin, one of the main cities of Manchukuo (the Japanese puppet state in Manchuria) during August 1945. They wear standard summer field uniform of M35 sidecaps and M43 light khaki cotton field shirts. (Courtesy Central Museum of the Armed Forces, Moscow)

Caucasus

An inactive theatre following the expulsion of German forces by 9 October 1943. Garrisoned by the Transcaucasus Front's 45th Army, with 4th Army occupying north-western Iran (Iranian Azerbaijan).

Manchuria

The Red Army ended World War II fighting Japan, its first enemy in August 1939. The Manchurian campaign eliminated the Japanese threat to the Soviet Union and paved the way for increased Soviet influence in the Far East.

Manchurian Offensive, 9 August–2 September 1945. 1st and 2nd Far Eastern and Transbaikal Fronts advanced 500 miles against the Japanese Kwantung Army, liberating the Japanese puppet states of Manchukuo and Inner Mongolia, and occupying northern Korea, southern Sakhalin and some of the Kurile Islands.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

A *mladshiy leytenant* of Armoured Troops, commanding a T-34 tank during the Manchurian campaign of August 1945. He wears an M34 padded helmet with goggles, blue M33 tank overalls with a single breast pocket, and marching boots. Against regulations, he has added M43 gold service-dress shoulder boards, with red piping and centre-stripe, and a silver tank branch badge above one small silver star. (Tschakov Collection)

LAND FORCES UNIFORMS

15 January 1943–2 September 1945

On 6 January 1943 the Soviet Supreme Presidium introduced new uniforms with effect from 15 January. These included a high-collared *gymnastiorka* field shirt, and rank insignia on the re-introduced shoulder boards (*pogoni*); the latter had previously been identified with the anti-Soviet forces in the Russian Civil War. Soviet propaganda claimed that the Red Army could now be 'trusted' to wear the traditional Russian uniform – which also implied that the Soviet system enjoyed historical legitimacy and a claim on Russian patriotism. Hereafter, 'M43' refers to items introduced 15 January 1943 unless otherwise specified. Despite wartime shortages the changeover to the new uniforms and insignia was completed rapidly, though obsolete items continued to be worn alongside them.

In April 1945 the M43 general officer's light grey dress uniform, a development of the M40 model, was superseded by the 'Tsarist dark green' dress uniform; lower ranks wore khaki dress, service, and field uniforms. The two ranks of 'Marshal of branch of service' (*Marshal roda voysk*), introduced 4 February 1943, wore a less prestigious version of the uniform of a *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza*. Non-combat branches wore silver insignia and braid instead of gold (see Table 3).

Headgear

The general officers' M43 light grey woollen dress peaked cap had branch-colour crown piping and a facing-colour band, with an M40 cap badge on M43 gold (or silver) wire laurel leaves (oak for a *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza*), and gold (or silver) wire chin cords; their peaked field cap had a black patent leather strap. The M45 general officers' dress peaked cap was simply the M43 model in dark green cloth. With the M43 dress tunic, officers and enlisted men wore the M35 khaki peaked cap with branch-colour crown piping and facing cap band.

The following headgear were unmodified: M41 officer's khaki peaked field cap, SSh-40 steel helmet, M41 officers' and M35 enlisted woollen *pilotka* sidecap, M40 general officers' grey lambswool *papakha* cap (for colonels, with a khaki cloth crown), M42 *shapka-ushanka* fur cap, and M38 panama hat.

Tunics and field shirts

The M43 general officers' light grey pocketless dress tunic for a *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* had six gilt front buttons; branch-colour front piping; gold wire inner edging and thick gold wire oakleaves on the standing collar and straight cuffs; and gold 'Russia braid' shoulder boards (see below, Insignia). A 'marshal of branch of service' had facing-colour collar and cuffs with a 16-leaf gold laurel branch. Other general officers had a light grey collar with branch-colour piping and gold (or silver) inner edging and a 14-leaf gold laurel branch; light grey cuffs bore branch-colour piping, and three vertical German-style gold/ silver wire 'guards braids'. The M45 dark green double-breasted dress tunic for a *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* had two rows of six gold buttons with the M43 insignia, while marshals of branch of service had dark green collars and cuffs.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

The M43 officers' khaki pocketless dress tunic had six gilt buttons; branch-colour piping on the standing collar, front edge and straight cuffs; and facing-colour parallelogram collar patches. Field officers had gold braid shoulder boards; two gold braid collar-patch bars with silver zig-zags, and two gold 'guards braids' on branch-colour facings on the cuffs. Captains and subalterns had one collar braid and one cuff braid. Non-combat officers with silver shoulder boards had silver collar braids with gold zigzags, and silver cuff braids.

The M43 khaki dress tunic for cadets, NCOs and men had five front buttons, a gold/ silver braid horizontal collar-patch stripe for NCOs, and plain cuffs with branch-colour piping for men. This tunic was worn with an M40 brown leather officers' dress belt or enlisted service belt.

An example of the contrast in quality between officers' and enlisted ranks' field uniforms. The elegant *Leytenant* Dmitry Balashov (left) wears a tall M40 light grey fleece cap, and an M43 khaki woollen field shirt with concealed breast pockets. His khaki M43 field shoulder boards are piped red, with a dark red centre stripe, an out-of-date gold artillery branch badge and two silver rank stars. His companion has the squatter M42 dark grey fleece cap, and an inferior-quality pocketless field shirt. Note that this gunner displays two M42 dark red 'light wound' stripes on his right breast, and on the left the Order of Glory, a gold star on an orange-and-black ribbon. This was awarded to subaltern officers, NCOs and men for bravery in the field. (Tschakov Collection)

The M43 general officers' and officers' khaki woollen five-button service tunic was the M40 model with a standing collar, branch-colour collar and cuff piping, and M43 service or field shoulder boards of rank. General officers also wore grey, summer khaki cotton, and heavy woollen versions of this tunic. The officers' white summer service tunic was unpiped.

The M43 superior quality officers' khaki woollen winter or light khaki cotton summer *gymnastiorka* field shirt had a standing collar with two brass buttons, three front buttons, two-button cuffs, and patch breast pockets with scalloped buttoned flaps but no piping. Cadets, NCOs and men wore a lower quality field shirt without breast pockets.

Overcoats

The M43 officers' light grey summer topcoat, introduced 30 April 1943, had two rows of four brass buttons, a collar worn open or closed, plain cuffs, and concealed waist pockets with buttonless rectangular flaps, service shoulder boards and collar patches. The following items were updated by adding M43 service or field shoulder boards and collar patches: M41 general officers' light grey dress greatcoat, M41 officers' dark grey or khaki double-breasted service or field greatcoat, various models of the officers' black leather double-breasted greatcoat, and the officers' M31 *bekesha* fur-collared coat or M31 fur-collared sheepskin coat. NCOs and men wore the M41 enlisted khaki greatcoat. All ranks wore the M35 light khaki waterproof double-breasted padded jacket, the khaki quilted M43 *telogreika* with M38 high collar or M41 turn-down collar, and the M38 *plashch-palatka* waterproof hooded cloak.

Legwear and footwear

General officers wore the M40 light grey dress breeches, other officers M41 khaki dress breeches, and NCOs and men khaki M35 plain breeches with the M43 dress uniform. General officers wore M45 dark green dress breeches with branch-colour piping and stripes in the M45 dress uniform. Officers wore the M35 officers' navy blue service breeches or trousers, officers' white summer service trousers, and piped or plain M40 khaki field breeches. NCOs and men wore khaki M35 plain *vatnie sharovari* breeches, and all ranks wore the M41 winter khaki woollen and summer light khaki cotton versions.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

August 1944: Members of a reconnaissance platoon from 27th Guards Rifle Division under 29th Guards Rifle Corps, 8th Guards Army, 1st Byelorussian Front, photographed while guarding the Magnuszew bridgehead on the west bank of the River Vistula in Poland. Most of these soldiers, including the officer (left, back row, identifiable by his peaked service cap), wear light green M41 hooded overalls, printed with dark green or brown 'amoeba'-shaped camouflage patches, over their M43 light khaki cotton summer field shirts. They wear M35 summer-weight sidecaps, some having lost the M22 red star badge, and carry PPSh-41 sub-machine guns. Note the woman soldier (centre, back row), wearing a hairnet, and displaying the Guards badge and the Order of the Red Star. Full campaign medals and decorations were routinely worn in the field as aids to morale. (Tschakov Collection)

Officers and mounted NCOs and men wore black leather riding boots, enlisted men black marching boots or khaki woollen puttees with black ankle boots. All ranks wore *valenki* felt boots in cold weather.

The field equipment was as described in MAA 464; camouflage uniforms were as described in MAA 468, and the caption to the photo on page 20 in this book.

Branch-specific uniforms

The M43 uniforms continued the process of standardization initiated 13 July 1940, leaving few uniform items peculiar to specific branches.

Armoured troops wore the M34 black leather or M37 'moleskin' jacket, with tank and motor vehicle crews retaining the M34 khaki padded tank-crew helmet and blue M35 overalls. **Mounted cavalry and field artillery officers** retained the long dark grey greatcoat and M29 cavalry officers' dark blue riding breeches, M29 khaki field peaked cap, and M31 cavalry and horse artillery padded tunic. **Cossacks** wore M43 field uniforms with dark blue baggy M35 *vatnie sharovari* trousers and black leather riding boots, and carried *shaska* sabres. Terek and Kuban Cossacks wore the *kubanka* fur cap, with, respectively, light blue and red cap crowns and trouser piping. Don Cossacks wore the *papachka* fur cap, or the dark blue M36 service peaked cap with red crown piping and band (officially abolished 1 February 1941), and broad red trouser stripes. Cossacks wore their M36 ceremonial uniforms with M43 service shoulder boards at the Victory Parade of 24 June 1945. The Cossacks served the mistrustful Soviet régime well, but mounted cavalry was now obsolete, and most cavalry and all Cossack units were disbanded between October 1945 and May 1946.

When on duty, military commandants, deputy commandants and assistant commandants of the **Military Transport Corps** (VOSO), supervising rail, sea and road facilities, adopted a bright red M35 service peaked cap from 18 May 1943; this had a gold wire winged wheel on a black velvet triangle on the front crown, green crown and upper band piping, and a black velvet band. An M43 service tunic was worn,

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Table 2: Red Army Orders of Dress 15 January 1943–2 September 1945

General officers	Officers (1)	NCOs and Men
Dress Uniform (parades and ceremonial occasions)		
M43 or M45 dress cap or M40 fleece-cap; M43 or M45 dress or white tunic or greatcoat; M40 or M45 dress or M35 service breeches; riding boots; M43 or M45 dress belt.	M35 peaked servic cap or M42 fleece-cap, M43 dress tunic, M43 service greatcoat; M35 breeches; riding boots; M43 or M45 dress belt.	M35 peaked cap or M35 sidecap; M43 dress tunic, M43 greatcoat; M35/41 field breeches; M40 belt (2); marching boots.
Undress Uniform (ceremonial occasions)		
M43 or M43 dress cap; M43 dress or white or M45 dress tunic; M35 service or M40 dress trousers; shoes.	M35 peaked service cap or M42 fur cap; M43 dress tunic; M43 service greatcoat; M35 trousers; shoes.	M35 peaked cap or M35 sidecap; M43 dress tunic; M43 greatcoat; M41 field breeches; marching boots.
Winter Service Uniform (daily duties and exercises in formation with troops)		
M43 peaked cap or M40 fleece cap; M43 service or white tunic; M43 service greatcoat; M35 breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt and cross brace.	M35 peaked service cap or M42 fur cap; M43 service tunic or M43 winter field shirt; M43 service greatcoat; M35 breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt and cross brace.	M35 peaked service cap or M42 fur cap; M43 winter field shirt; M43 greatcoat; M41 field breeches; marching boots; M40 enlisted belt (2) (3); gloves.
Winter Service Uniform (undress) (meetings off duty, classes, leave, and exercises not in formation with troops)		
M43 peaked cap; M43 service tunic; M43 service greatcoat; M35 trousers; shoes; gloves.	M35 peaked cap or M42 fleece-cap; M43 service tunic or M43 winter field shirt; M35 service greatcoat; M35 trousers; shoes; gloves; M35 service belt and cross brace optional.	As above. Re-enlisted NCOs also wore the M35 peaked cap (3).
Summer Service Uniform (daily duties and exercises in formation with troops)		
M43 peaked cap; M43 service or white tunic; M43 service greatcoat; M35 breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt and cross brace.	M35 peaked cap or M41 sidecap; M43 service tunic or M43 summer field shirt; M43 service greatcoat; M35 breeches; riding boots; M35 service belt and cross brace.	M35 sidecap; M43 light summer field shirt; M43 greatcoat; M41 field breeches; marching boots; M40 enlisted belt (2).
Summer Service Uniform (undress) (meetings off duty, classes, leave, and exercises not in formation with troops)		
M43 peaked service cap; M43 service or white tunic; M35 breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt and cross brace.	M35 peaked cap or M41 sidecap; M43 service tunic or M43 summer or white field shirt; M43 service greatcoat, M35 breeches with riding boots or M35 trousers with shoes; gloves. M35 service belt and cross brace optional.	As above.
Winter and Summer Guard Duty Uniform (patrols, standing guard, parades, reporting to a superior)		
	Helmet, M35 peaked field cap or M41 sidecap; M43 winter or summer field shirt; M43 field greatcoat; M35/41 breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt, cross brace and holster, or M32 field belt, supporting straps and holster; officers' field equipment.	Helmet, M42 fleece cap or M35 sidecap; M43 winter or summer field shirt and trousers; M43 greatcoat; M41 field breeches with marching boots or puttees and ankle boots; gloves; M40 enlisted belt (2) (3); one ammunition pouch.
Winter and Summer Field Uniform (marches, manoeuvres, field exercises, active service)		
Helmet, M41 peaked field cap or M40 fleece cap; M43 service tunic or M43 field shirt; M40 field breeches; riding boots; gloves; M32 field belt, supporting straps; holster; officers' field equipment.	Helmet, M40 peaked cap, M42 fleece cap; M41 sidecap or M38 panama hat; M43 winter or summer field shirt; M43 quilted jacket and trousers; M43 canvas overjacket and M44 breeches; M43 field greatcoat; M41 field breeches; riding boots; gloves; M35 service belt, cross brace and holster or M32 field belt, supporting straps and holster; officers' field equipment.	Helmet, M42 fleece cap, M35 sidecap or M38 panama hat; M43 light khaki summer field shirt and trousers; M43 greatcoat; M43 quilted jacket and trousers; M43 canvas overjacket and M44 breeches; M41 field breeches with marching boots or puttees and ankle boots; gloves; M38 field belt; supporting straps; enlisted field equipment
Notes: (1) Special Military Secondary School pupils wore officers' uniform; Military College cadets, officers' uniform with some enlisted uniform items. (2) Military College cadets wore a special leather belt. (3) A *Starshina* wore an M38 officers' belt and cross brace.		

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

A reconnaissance patrol cutting German barbed wire to clear the way for an infantry attack. They are wearing M41 hooded overalls with a late-war camouflage pattern: a light khaki ground, overprinted with brown 'amoeba' patches, and all overprinted with a tight, continuous green foliate pattern with 'saw-tooth' edges. The weapon is the PPS-43 sub-machine gun. (Courtesy Central Museum of the Armed Forces, Moscow)

with a black velvet collar and green shoulder-board, collar and cuff piping (officers with black centre-stripes), and on the left upper sleeve a gold metal or embroidered winged wheel on a black velvet diamond edged green. From 1941 troops on road traffic duty wore on the left upper sleeve a gold stencil 'P' (*Voenniy Regulirovshchik* – Military Traffic Regulator) on a black cloth circle edged white, on a khaki diamond edged red.

Female personnel wore the uniforms described in MAA 468, with M43 shoulder boards and collar patches, but omitting collar patches on the M41 khaki dress. Their right-buttoning M43 khaki woollen winter or light khaki cotton summer *gymnastiorka* field shirt was issued only in limited numbers, so women usually wore male uniform items. Women were not issued M43 or M45 dress uniforms.

Cadets and military pupils were issued special uniforms and insignia. **Military College** cadets wore M43 enlisted uniforms with special service shoulder boards. From 26 October 1943, **Special Military Secondary School** pupils wore officers' headgear and M43 officers' tunics, field shirts and grey double-breasted service greatcoats, with artillery or air force piping, collar patches and narrow service shoulder boards. **Suvorov Military College** cadets wore black uniforms, comprising a service peaked cap with white crown and upper band piping, red band, and M22 red star cap badge, with a white crown cover in summer. Their eight-buttoned service tunic had red collar and cuff piping, gold 'guards braids' on red patches on the standing collar, and red shoulder boards piped white, worn with black trousers piped red. The double-breasted greatcoat had a fly front, six decorative brass front buttons, concealed slash waistpockets, plain cuffs, and red collar patches and shoulder boards piped white. There was also a grey M43 *gymnastiorka* field shirt (white in summer) with service shoulder boards.

Branch distinctions

The M43 branch distinctions for the Red Army and Red Army Air Force were more complicated than the M40 system. Nevertheless, they retained

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

January 1945: Red Army infantrymen take shelter in a ruined bakery as they fight their way through an east German town. They are wearing standard M43 winter field uniform for enlisted ranks – M42 dark grey fleece caps, and M43 khaki greatcoats with khaki field shoulder boards and collar patches. As assault troops they are armed with PPSh-41 sub-machine guns, here with the later 'banana' magazines rather than drums. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

the five facing colours – red, crimson, blue, black and dark green; the five contrasting piping colours – red, crimson, blue, green and black; and 15 branch badges. Three secondary branch-colour piping colours were added – black, red and green. Branch affiliation was shown in eight ways, as follows:

M43 service peaked-cap Branch facing-colour band, and primary branch-colour piping on the crown and the upper edge of the band.

Officers' service shoulder boards Gold (or silver) braid, with silver (or gold) rank stars and branch badge; primary branch-colour piping and centre-stripes.

Officers' field shoulder boards Khaki silk for general officers or brown woollen for field and subaltern officers, with silver (1944, gold) rank stars and service shoulder-board branch badge (silver for Veterinary Service); primary branch-colour piping; and dark ('claret') red or brown cloth centre-stripes for officers with gold or silver braid service shoulder boards respectively.

Enlisted service shoulder boards Branch facing-colour, with secondary branch-colour piping, and gold or silver braid rank bars (matching the officers' branch service shoulder boards). The gold or silver branch badge was worn below the bars and above the yellow-stencil unit designation.

Enlisted field shoulder boards Brown cloth, with primary branch-colour piping, and dark red or brown braid rank bars (matching the officers' centre stripes). No branch badge or unit stencil.

Service collar patches Branch facing-colour, with secondary branch-colour piping and brass button. General officers wore gold or silver wire piping.

Field collar patches Brown cloth, with primary branch-colour piping and brass button. General officers wore gold or silver wire piping.

Primary branch-colour piping Worn on the collar, cuff and front edge of the officers' M43 dress tunic, the collar and cuff of the M43 officers' service and enlisted dress tunics, and on the dark blue M35 officers' service breeches.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

East Germany, March 1945: a group of Red Army infantrymen receive orders from an officer. Most of them wear the M35 *pilotka*, the M41 khaki greatcoat with khaki M43 field insignia piped dark red, and the M35 enlisted ranks' belt; they carry Mosin-Nagant 7.62mm M1930 rifles. However, one man (left, rear) has an M41 *telogreika* quilted jacket fitted with M43 shoulder boards. The Armoured Troops officer is wearing a khaki M35 service-dress cap with a black velvet band, and a well-worn M29 black leather jacket. This scene typifies the exhausted but determined appearance of the Red Army *frontovik* as he neared the end of a gruelling but victorious campaign. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

Combat arms rank insignia

All ranks wore rank insignia on service or field shoulder boards, and from 24 July 1943 the rank classes were reorganized into four 'officer' groups (replacing 'commanders'). General officers had 14–16cm x 6.5cm shoulder boards in a hexagonal zigzag ('Russian') pattern braid, gold for service dress and khaki for field dress, with silver wire insignia and cloth piping. From senior to junior, the distinctions were as follows:

Generalissimus Sovetskogo Soyuza: Rank introduced 26 June 1945 and conferred the following day on Stalin as a personal distinction, lapsing on his death. The dictator continued to wear the uniform of a *Marshal Sovetskskogo Soyuza*, but adopted a unique light grey service tunic with a turn-down collar and service collar patches.

Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza: Red-piped shoulder boards, with 0.5cm diameter five-point star, replaced 4 February 1943 by a red, gold and blue 4.2cm x 3.8cm M36 Soviet State Emblem above a 4.7cm diameter star. A 4.45cm diameter gold star with platinum inset and five diamonds was worn from a red watered-silk neck ribbon.

Glavniy Marshal roda voysk (Chief Marshal of a branch of service): Rank introduced 27 October 1943, and intended for commanders of the Armour, Artillery, Engineers, Signals and Air Force branches of the Red Army. These were to be titled, respectively, *Glavniy Marshal Bronetankovykh Voysk/ Artillerii/ Inzhenernykh Voysk/ Voysk Svyazi/* and *Aviatsii*. Shoulder boards piped in branch colour bore a silver wire branch badge above a 40mm star in a laurel wreath. In fact, Nikolay N. Voronov, commanding Red Army artillery, was the only non-Air Force officer to hold this rank during World War II.

Marshal roda voysk: Rank introduced 4 February 1943 for Armour, Artillery and Air Force, and 27 October 1943 for Engineers and Signals; titles were *Marshal Bronetankovykh Voysk*, etc., as above. Shoulder boards piped in branch colour bore a branch badge above a silver wire 0.5cm (27 October 1943, 0.4cm) star. From 27 February 1943 all marshals and chief marshals wore a 'small' (0.42cm) gold star with platinum inset, suspended from a branch-colour watered-silk neck ribbon.

General Armii: Red-piped shoulder boards with four 0.22cm stars.

General-Polkovnik – General Mayor: Shoulder boards piped in branch colour, with 3–1x 0.22cm stars. Artillery generals wore the crossed cannons branch badge above their stars from 8 February 1943.

Polkovnik – Mayor (field officers): 'Pentagonal' (i.e. clipped to a point) service and field shoulder boards,14–16cm x 6cm, piped in branch

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

colour; two centre-stripes; branch badge above 3–1x 0.2cm stars.
Kapitan – Mladshiy Leytenant (captain and subalterns): As field officers', but one centre-stripe, and 4–1x 1.3cm stars.
Starshina (sergeant-major): Pentagonal service and field shoulder boards, 14–16 x 6cm, piped in branch colour, with 0.3cm transverse and 0.15cm longitudinal rank bar, and metal branch-badge.
Starshiy Serzhant – Krasnoarmeyets (NCOs and men): For *starshiy serzhant*, the starshina's shoulder-straps with transverse 0.3cm wide rank bar; then, 3–0x 0.1cm bars; below these, metal branch badge, and (rarely worn) yellow paint stencilled unit designation.

Non-combat arms rank insignia

Silver braid distinguished the ten Army non-combat branches. The Artillery Engineering and Technical Services, Armour Engineering and Engineer-Technical Services, the Supply Service, and, from 4 February 1943, the Administrative Service had military rank titles with branch suffixes, and wore full-size silver braid officers' service shoulder boards, and NCOs' silver service or brown field rank bars. Technical Troops general officers changed to gold shoulder boards 4 February 1943, and officers' and NCOs' rank titles had no branch suffix.

The other three non-combat branches were also awarded military rank titles with branch suffixes: Medical and Veterinary Service officers on 2 January 1943, and Legal officers 4 February 1943. General officers wore narrow 14–16cm x 4.5cm shoulder boards in 'Russian' silver braid or khaki braid for service and field dress, with gold wire branch badges and 0.2cm diameter stars. Other officers had 'pentagonal' 14–16cm x 0.4cm shoulder boards in silver or khaki braid, with gold metal branch badges and stars (0.16cm for field officers, 0.13cm for subalterns). Medical and Veterinary officers with military training for command positions wore full-size shoulder boards.

Cadets

Cadets and pupils wore branch-coloured service shoulder boards only. **Military College** officer cadets wore 0.12cm gold or silver braid on the outer edges of their full-size coloured shoulder boards, gold or silver NCO rank bars and branch badges, and the college abbreviation in yellow stencil. There were six ranks, from *kursant-starshina* down to *kursant*.

From 26 October 1943, pupils at **Special Military Secondary Schools** wore narrow 12.5–14.5 x 0.4cm shoulder boards, with 7–8mm gold braid around the outer edges. These were black piped in red with gold crossed cannons (artillery), or light blue piped in black with a gold winged propeller (Air Force), and a yellow stencil designation. Gold NCO bars denoted appointments: *starshina roty* (Air Force company sergeant-major), or *starshina baterei* (artillery battery sergeant-major) – 1.4–1.5cm wide bar; *pomoshchnik komandira vzvoda* (deputy platoon leader) – 3x 0.7–8cm bars; and *komandir otdeleniya* (section commander) – 2x 0.7–8cm bars. The *ryadovoy uchashchiysya* (college private) had no bars.

From 21 September 1943, **Suvorov Military School** pupils wore full-size red shoulder boards piped white with the name of the school in yellow stencil. A final-year pupil, ranked as vice-sergeant (*vize-serzhant*), wore 0.12cm gold shoulder-board edging, adding a 0.12cm longitudinal stripe if a sergeant (*serzhant*).

Early April 1945: *Podpolkovnik* P.G. Mzachih, officer commanding 88th Independent Guards Heavy Tank Regt, poses for a portrait photo in woodland near Küstrin, 50 miles east of Berlin. The colonel's expression is serious; he will soon commit his regiment to defending the town, captured on 25 March, against a determined German counter-attack. Mzachih is wearing the officers' M43 khaki tunic with red collar and cuff piping; his khaki 'Russian braid' field shoulder boards are piped in red, with two dark red centre-stripes, the tank branch badge and two gold rank stars. On his right breast are the Order of the Red Star, two Orders of the Patriotic War, and the Guards badge; on his left, three Orders of the Red Banner precede two campaign medals. (Tschakov Collection)

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

RED ARMY AIR FORCE

1 January 1944–2 September 1945

BELOW
April 1945: a tough-looking crewman in a Guards tank unit stands ready for dismounted action in a German town. He is wearing an M42 dark grey fleece cap with M22 red star badge, and M35 dark blue tank overalls, with the non-regulation addition of M43 khaki field shoulder boards piped red. Note too the Guards badge and an Order of Glory gallantry decoration. He is carrying a captured *Panzerfaust 30*, and has a German M39 'egg' grenade on his belt. (From the Fonds of the RGAKFD at Krasnogorsk)

BELOW RIGHT
Berlin, April 1945: *Gvardii Serzhant* I.D. Serikov, proudly displaying his Orders of Glory 1st, 2nd and 3rd Class, as well as his Guards badge. Serikov is wearing an M35 sidecap, and an officer's M43 field shirt with breast pockets and gilt (rather than subdued dark brown) buttons. The three dark red transverse bars of his rank are just visible on his khaki M43 field shoulder boards, piped crimson. He carries a PPS-43 sub-machine gun, and the uncropped print shows that he is standing in front of a camouflage-painted US Lend-Lease M3 White scout car. (Tschakov Collection)

The Air Force was a combat arm of the Red Army, comprising air regiments, airborne (paratroop) brigades, and airfield protection infantry. The title Red Army Aviation (*Aviatsiya Krasnoy Armii*, AKA) was retained until 25 February 1946, when the service was renamed Military Air Force of the Soviet Army (*Voenno-Vozdushnye Sily Sovetskoy Armii*, VVS-SA). Throughout this period it was commanded by *Glavniy Marshal Aviatsii* Aleksandr A. Novikov. From January 1944 the AKA maintained air superiority over all its theatres of operations, supporting Soviet strategic offensives. It faced a Luftwaffe badly weakened by transfers to the West to oppose the Anglo-American strategic bombing offensive and, from June 1944, the Normandy landings and subsequent operations in NW Europe. The AKA remained a tactical force, although 18th Air Army (ex-ADD) mounted a limited bombing offensive over eastern Germany in 1945.

Organization of air units

Organization was simplified into five sections, plus the paratroops (see MAA 468 for more detail on tactical air formations and units):
(1) Long Range Aviation (ADD), the strategic bomber force, with 17 long-range bomber divisions formed into eight long-range bomber corps. Reorganized in December 1944 into 18th Air Army, under *Marshal* Aleksandr Golovanov.
(2) 18 Air Armies, numbered 1–18. An Air Army (*Vozdushnaya armiya*) usually comprised five Air Divisions, plus independent units, and one or two air armies were assigned to each Red Army Front.
(3) GHQ Reserve, comprising 6 Air Corps with 20 Air Divisions.
(4) Military District Reserve, with 25 Air Divisions.
(5) National Air Defence Fighter Aviation (IA-PVO). Four Fighter Air Corps, with 21 divisions, provided fighter cover for Moscow, Leningrad, and cities in European Russia recaptured during the Soviet advance westward.

The Civil Air Fleet (*Grazhdanskiy Vozdushniy Flot* – GVF) contributed 1st–3rd Transport Air Regiments, and 1st–3rd and 5th Independent Transport Air Regiments. Personnel wore standard M43 Air Force uniforms and insignia.

During the period 1944–45 a total of 45 **Air Corps** were operational: eight Long-Range Bomber (1–4 Guards, 5–8 AK DD); nine Bomber (1–7, 9 Guards, 19 BAK); 13 Fighter (1–8 Guards, 9–11, 13 & 14 IAK); 6 Mixed (1, 3, 6, 9, 11 & 18 SAK); and nine Ground Attack (1–3 Guards, 4–8, 10 ShAK).

(continued on page 34)

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

ARMED FORCES COMMANDERS

1: *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Iosif V. Stalin, May 1944

2: *Admiral Flota* Nikolai G. Kuznetzov, June 1944

3: *Glavniy Marshal Aviatsii* Aleksandr A. Novikov, April 1945

2 1 3

A

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

NORTHERN THEATRE, 1944

1: *Serzhant*, 372nd Rifle Div; Vyborg, June 1944

2: *Polkovnik*, Artillery, 115th Rifle Div; Novgorod, January 1944

3: *Starshiy Leytenant*, Naval Infantry, Baltic Fleet; Estonia, September 1944

1 2 3

B

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

CENTRAL & SOUTHERN THEATRES, 1944

1: *Gvardii Krasnoarmeyets*, 25th Guards Tank Bde; Minsk, July 1944

2: *Kapitan*, 211th Rifle Div; Dukla Pass, September 1944

3: *Leytenant*, 224th Ground Attack Air Div; Brody, July 1944

1 **2** **3**

C

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

SOUTHERN THEATRE, 1944

1: *General-Mayor Meditsinskoy Sluzhby*, 46th Army; Budapest, December 1944

2: *General-Mayor*, 5th Air Army; Romania, August 1944

3: *Starshiy Leytenant*, 62nd NKVD Rifle Div; Belgrade, December 1944

1 2 3

D

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

CENTRAL, SOUTHERN & NORTHERN THEATRES, 1945

1: *Gvardii Mladshiy Serzhant*, 47th Guards Tank Bde; Warsaw, January 1945

2: *Yefreytor*, Airfield Battalion; Vienna, April 1945

3: *Kapitan 3-go ranga* Aleksandr I. Marinesko, Baltic Fleet, January 1945

1 **2** **3**

E

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

CENTRAL EUROPE, 1945

1: *Gvardii Starshina*, 10th Guards Cavalry Div; Prague, May 1945

2: *Mladshiy Serzhant*, 58th Guards Rifle Div; Torgau, 25 April 1945

3: *Yefreytor*, 150th Rifle Div; Berlin, 30 April 1945

1 **2** **3**

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

MOSCOW VICTORY PARADE, 24 JUNE 1945

1: ***Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza*** **Georgiy K. Zhukov**

2: ***Gvardii Mayor*****, 2nd Guards Tank Corps**

3: ***Komissar Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti 3-go ranga*****, NKGB**

G

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

MANCHURIA, AUGUST 1945
1: *Starshiy Serzhant*, NKVD Border Troops, Harbin
2: *Serzhant*, 384th Rifle Div, Changchun
3: *Mladshiy Serzhant*, Naval Infantry, Pacific Fleet, Mukden

1 2 3

H

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Table 3: Red Army Branch Distinctions 15 January 1943–2 September 1945

Branch (with dates of formation)	Service shoulder board braid	Primary piping	Service collar patch	Secondary piping	Branch badge (silver, unless otherwise noted)
Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza & General Armii	Gold	Red	Red	Gold	-
Infantry general-officers	Gold	Red	Red	Gold	-
Infantry	Gold	Crimson	Crimson	Black	Crossed rifles on target (unofficial)
Cavalry (including Cossacks)	Gold	Blue	Blue	Black	Horseshoe on crossed sabres
Armoured Troops	Gold	Red	Black	Red	Tank (in pairs, gun facing right)
Motor Transport	Gold	Red	Black	Red	Winged steering wheel, axle & wheels
Armour Engineering Service (4.2.1943) (1)	Silver	Red	Black	Red	Brass armour or motor transport badge
Artillery	Gold	Red	Black	Red	Crossed cannons
Anti-tank Artillery	Gold	Red	Black	Red	Crossed cannons; sleeve badge
Artillery Engineering Service (4.2.1943) (1)	Silver	Red	Black	Red	Brass crossed cannons
Artillery Technical Service (21.10.1944)	Silver	Red	Black	Red	Brass crossed hammer and wrench (pairs)
Engineer general officers	Gold	Crimson	Crimson	Gold	-
Engineers	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Crossed axes
Electrical Engineers	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Crossed axes on lightning bolts
Construction Engineers	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Crossed pickaxe and spade (pairs)
Military Transport Corps commandants	Gold	Green	Black	Green	Red star, winged anchor, crossed hammer & wrench; sleeve badge.
Military Transport Corps & Railway Troops	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Red star, winged anchor, crossed hammer & wrench
Survey	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Red star on crossed hammer & wrench (pairs) (22.6.1943)
Chemical Troops	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Mask on crossed canisters (1.3.1943 crossed hammer & wrench) (pairs)
Signals general-officers	Gold	Crimson	Crimson	Gold	-
Signals	Gold	Black	Black	Black	Red star, wings & lightning bolts
Technical Troops general-officers (4.2.1943)	Silver	Crimson	Crimson	Silver	Brass crossed hammer & wrench (pairs)
Technical Troops general-officers (14.2.1943)	Gold	Crimson	Crimson	Gold	-
Technical Troops (4.2.1943)	Silver	Branch	Branch	Silver	Brass crossed hammer & wrench (pairs)
Engineering Technical Service (14.2.1943) (1)	Silver	Branch	Branch	Silver	Brass branch badge (2)
Supply Service	Silver	Crimson	Crimson	Black	Red star, brass hammer & sickle
Administration Service	Silver	Red	Red	Black	-
Medical Service	Silver	Red	Dark green	Red	Brass chalice & snake (pairs)
Veterinary Service	Silver	Red	Dark green	Red	Chalice & snake (pairs)
Legal Officers	Silver	Crimson	Crimson	Black	Brass shield on crossed swords
Bandmasters	Branch	Branch	Branch	Branch	Lyre
Political officers	Branch	Branch	Branch	Branch	Branch badge
Air Force (including Paratroopers)	Gold	Light blue	Light blue	Black	Two-bladed winged propeller
Air Force Servicing Battalions	Gold	Light blue	Light blue	Black	-
Air Force Engineering Service (4.2.1943) (1)	Silver	Light blue	Light blue	Black	Brass two-bladed winged propeller; 11.1944 red star, winged radial engine, propeller
Air Force Technical Service (21.10.1944)	Silver	Light blue	Light blue	Black	Brass crossed hammer & wrench (pairs)

Notes: (1) General officers wore gold braid from 14.2.1943. (2) Cavalry, Infantry (crossed hammer & wrench), Engineers, Electrical and Construction Engineers, Railway and Chemical Troops, Survey and Signals.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

March 1944: the commander of 1st Guards Bomber Air Division, *Gvardii Polkovnik* F. I. Dobysh, briefs the crew of a Petlyakov Pe-2. The airmen are wearing fur-lined brown leather flying helmets, khaki flight overalls and PL-3M parachute harness; two have fleece-lined leather flying jackets and black fur *unty* flying boots. Note (extreme top) the Guards badge and the just-visible 'shark-mouth' painted on the nose of the Pe-2. The 1st Guards BAD served with 5th Air Army's 2nd Bomber Air Corps in the Balkans, with 2nd Ukrainian Front. (Tschakov Collection)

There were also 247 **Air Divisions**, operating in pairs within Air Corps or independently:
17x Long-Range Bomber (1–9 Guards, 1, 12, 36, 45, 48, 50, 53 & 54 AD DD)
1x Long-Range Fighter (56 I DD)
51x Bomber (1–8, 11, 13–16, 18, 19–22 Guards; 1, 12, 30, 33, 34, 36, 45, 48, 50, 53–5, 82, 83, 113, 132, 179, 183, 188, 202, 218, 219, 221, 241, 244, 247, 276, 280, 293, 301, 321, 327 & 334 BAD)
13x Night Bomber (2 & 9 Guards, 208, 213, 242, 262, 271, 284, 312–4, 325 & 326 NBAD)
95x Fighter (1–16, 22 & 23 Guards; 3, 29, 32, 36, 104, 106, 122–7, 129, 130, 141, 142, 144, 147–9, 164, 181, 185, 190, 193, 194, 203, 205, 215, 229, 234–236, 238, 240, 245, 246, 249, 250, 254, 256, 257, 259, 265, 269, 272, 273, 275, 278, 279, 282, 283, 286, 288, 294–8, 302–4, 309, 310, 315, 317–20, 322–4, 328–31 & 336 IAD)
11x Mixed (1 Guards; 33, 96, 128, 136, 254, 255, 257, 260, 261 & 296 SAD)
33x Ground-Attack (1–9, 11, 12 & 15 Guards; 96, 136, 182, 189, 196, 199, 206, 209, 211, 214, 224, 225, 227, 230, 231, 233, 248, 251–3, 260, 261, 264, 266, 277, 280, 281, 289, 291, 292, 299, 300, 305–8, 311, 316, 332, 333 & 335 ShAD)
1x Long-Range Transport (73 TRAD DD)
2x Special Purpose Transport (2 & 4 AD OH)

AIR FORCE UNIFORMS

January 1943–2 September 1945

The AKA adopted Red Army M43 and M45 uniforms and insignia, with light blue branch-colour piping and facings, and the winged propeller branch badge. Combat officers wore the M37 gold star-and-wings insignia on the M43 peaked service cap. The M24 and M25 qualification 'wings' badges were retained on the left upper sleeve.

Airborne forces

The paratroopers of the 16 Guards divisions of the Airborne Forces (VDV) were reorganized into three Guards rifle corps; a corps comprised

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Four aces of the 9th Guards Fighter Division pose in 1945 in front of a Lend-Lease Bell P-39 Airacobra painted with 47 victory stars. Although the P-39 – which represented one in three of all Allied aircraft supplied to the USSR – had a mediocre reputation in US service, Soviet pilots achieved impressive results with it. The 9th Guards IAD served from November 1944 with the 8th Guards Fighter Corps in support of 1st Ukrainian Front in Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia. These pilots are (left to right) *Kapitan* Aleksandr Klubov (31 victories while flying P-39s, + 19 with other types); *Kapitan* Grigoriy Rechkalov (56 + 6); *Starshiy Leytenant* Andrey Trud (24 + 1); and *Major* Boris Glinka (31). They all wear standard M1943 service caps and *gymnastiorka* field shirts, Rechkalov and Trud with gold braid service shoulder boards, the other two with khaki field boards; Glinka's shows clearly the pale blue edges and centre stripes, and the rank star outside the Air Force branch symbol. The decorations worn here include the gold star of Hero of the Soviet Union, and Orders of the Red Star, Lenin, the Red Banner and Patriotic War. (Tschakov Collection)

three airborne divisions with no divisional HQ artillery or other units. 37th Guards Rifle Corps (98–100 Guards Rifle Divisions) was formed 19 January 1944 and fought in Karelia. In August 1944 it was redesignated 37th Guards Airborne Corps (*Gvardeyskiy Vozdushno-Desantniy Korpus*), with three Guards airborne divisions (still 98–100), followed 9 August 1944 by 38th Corps (104–106 Divs) and 39th Corps (100, 107 & 114 Divisions). In November 1944 the three corps were formed into the 'Independent Airborne Army', redesignated the following month as 9th Guards Army. Paratroopers fought as infantry with the 2nd Ukrainian Front in February 1945 at Budapest, and with the 3rd Ukrainian Front in April in Vienna and in May in Prague.

The 9th Guards Army paratroopers and Army replacements wore AKA uniforms, but some 'old sweats' retained khaki cloth flying helmets, khaki flight overalls and hooded jumpsuits with the M33 parachute qualification badge on the left breast.

NAVY

1 January 1944–2 September 1945

The Military Sea Fleet (*Voenno-Morski Flot* – VMF) was commanded by *Admiral* Nikolai G. Kuznetzov as People's Commissar for the Navy and naval commander-in-chief, with *Admiral* Ivan S. Isakov as his chief of staff. Both officers were promoted *Admiral Flota* on 31 May 1944, and *Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza* on 6 June 1945. (See MAA 468 for organization of branches of service, including Naval Aviation, and the sea-going and riverine Fleets and Flotillas.)

Summary of naval operations

The Axis retreat allowed the VMF to re-enter the Baltic and Black Seas, and to support Red Army operations off these coasts and along the Dnieper, Danube and Amur rivers and Lakes Onega and Ladoga.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

The Northern Fleet mounted operations during the Petsamo-Kirkenes offensive in October 1944, while the Pacific Fleet and its Amur Flotilla fought in Manchuria in August–September 1945. The Baltic Fleet participated in the offensives of Leningrad-Novgorod, January–March 1944; Vyborg-Petrozavodsk, June–August 1944 (with the Onega and Ladoga Flotillas); the Baltic, September–November 1944; East Prussia, January–April 1945; and Berlin, April–May 1945. Meanwhile, the Black Sea Fleet and Azov Flotilla helped liberate the Crimea, April–May 1944; and the Dnieper Flotilla fought in Belarus, June–September 1944, and Berlin, April–May 1945. The Danube Flotilla fought at Iasi-Kishinev in August 1944; Belgrade, September–October 1944; Budapest, October 1944–February 1945; and Vienna, March–April 1945.

NAVY UNIFORMS
15 January 1943–2 September 1945

The M43 naval uniform and insignia adapted the M41 uniforms, reintroducing the shoulder boards abolished in March 1917. The main uniform colour was black, and flag officers and lower ranks kept their respective M40 brass buttons. Female personnel wore male uniforms with the M36 dark blue or M42 khaki beret.

Officers' dress uniforms

The M41 flag officers' black dress and service peaked cap had an M24 badge, gold wire chinstrap, and gold wire edging and double oakleaf embroidery on the peak, with a white cloth crown cover in summer. The dress tunic was the M41 pattern with M43 branch-colour piping on the standing collar and M43 shoulder boards, with gold rank rings above the plain two-button cuff for Seamen's and line Engineering officers. Other branches had three vertical button-colour wire 'guards braids' on the cuffs, edged on two sides with three lines of button colour with branch-colour piping. M43 black dress trousers were plain, but coastal service, naval aviation and supply service general officers wore branch-colour piping and two wide stripes. Field officers wore the dress cap with a black leather chin strap (27 April 1945, gold or silver cords) and single oakleaf peak embroidery, subaltern officers with a plain peak. The dress tunic for Seamen's and line Engineering officers had cuff rank insignia, other branches two or one 'guards braids' with double or single button-colour edging with branch-colour piping. The M43 flag officers' summer parade uniform comprised an M41 service peaked cap with a white cover, an M41 double-breasted open-collar white tunic with M43 shoulder boards, two rows of gold or silver buttons, two concealed waist pockets with rectangular unbuttoned flaps, plain cuffs with two rear buttons, and gold cuff rank rings for Seamen and line Engineering branches. Other officers wore the M43 closed-collar white tunic.

The M45 dress and service peaked cap of an *Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza*, introduced 6 June 1945, was the flag officers' M41 model with four large gold wire oakleaves on the front of the band and wider double peak embroidery. The M45 double-breasted black dress tunic had a standing collar with gold wire edging and oakleaf embroidery, two rows of six M40 buttons, M45 gold braid shoulder boards, and a three-button rectangular black cuff patch with scalloped rear edge on a straight cuff, both with gold wire edging and oakleaf embroidery. The M45 flag officers' dress cap had smaller band oakleaves and single peak embroidery. The tunic had button-

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

colour oakleaf embroidery edged in button-colour wire around the collar, with a diagonal button-colour wire fouled anchor; M43 shoulder boards; and oakleaf embroidery around the cuff under a three-button cuff patch. Seamen's and line Engineering officers wore three horizontal gold-embroidered fouled anchors, oakleaves and buttons on their cuffs; other branches, branch-colour cuff piping, three horizontal button-colour 'guards braids', oakleaves and buttons. The M45 dress trousers for Seamen's and line Engineering flag officers had two wide gold braid stripes.

A *starshiy krasnoflotets* (right) in seaman's uniform and a rather incongruous M31 'Finnish' black lambskin cap reports to a *kontr-admiral* leading a delegation of naval officers. The officers wear M43 service uniforms comprising the black M41 peaked cap, M43 closed-collar dark blue service tunic and M41 black trousers. The IS-2 heavy tank in the background is a Red Army vehicle – the Navy had no armoured units. (Courtesy Central Museum of the Armed Forces, Moscow)

Field officers wore the dress and service peaked cap with button-colour chin cords and single button-colour oakleaf peak embroidery, with the same dress tunic as the flag officers but with double gold collar and cuff pipings, and cuff patches without oakleaves. Subaltern officers wore the dress and service peaked cap with a plain peak, and single collar and cuff pipings.

Officers' service uniforms

The officer's M43 black open-necked service tunic, and dark blue and white cotton closed-collar service tunics, were of M34 pattern with M43 shoulder boards and cuff rank bars. The black M43 officers' greatcoat, grey raincoat and black rubberized raincoat were of M34 pattern with added shoulder boards only. The M34 black lambskin cap, black M34 *pilotka* sidecap, and black woollen M41 officers' dress and service trousers were retained. Submarine commanders were awarded from 12 July 1942 a silver-plated badge depicting a Type U submarine with a red star on a gold hammer and sickle; the hammer and sickle were omitted from 16 October 1943.

Enlisted ranks' uniform

Senior petty officers (*michman* and *glavniy starshina*) wore officers' M43 service uniform. The *michman* wore the M39 officers' service peaked cap with M24 officers' badge; the *glavniy starshina* had an oval black cloth badge with gold wire edging and a red enamel star edged gold, with a gold hammer and sickle in a white boss above a gold wire fouled anchor. The officers' M43 dark blue and white cotton closed-collar service tunics, the M24 seaman's black double-breasted greatcoat with five decorative front buttons, or the M34 black *bushlat* pea-jacket were worn with M41 black trousers. Seamen ranking from *starshina 1-y* and *2-y stat'i* down to *krasnoflotets* with five years' seniority wore the M39 officers' peaked cap, others the M39 *bezkozirka* seaman's cap with M22 badge. The M34 black cloth *pilotka* sidecap, M34 dark blue winter or white cotton summer seaman's jumper, the blue and white striped vest, M34 black trousers, M24 seamen's black greatcoat, M34 pea-jacket and M34 fatigue uniform continued to be worn unchanged.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Table 4: Red Army, NKVD, Air Force and Navy ranks and rank insignia 15 January 1943–2 September 1945

Land and Air Force combat branches Combat branch suffixes (1) Non-combat branch suffixes (2) Engineering Technical Services (3) *(Shoulder board insignia)*	**Navy branches (naval titles)** (5) Combat branch/ technical suffixes (1) Non-combat branch suffixes (2) *(Shoulder board insignia / officers' cuff rings & bars)*	**NKGB** (6) NKVD Internal Troops (7) NKVD Border Troops (8) *(Shoulder board insignia)*	**British Army & Royal Navy equivalents**
Vysshiy komandniy sostav (Corps of Chief Commanders); 24.7.1943 Generali (General officers)			**General officers**
Generalissimus Sovetskogo Soyuza *(no specific insignia)*		-	-
Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza *(large star / state emblem, large star)*	**Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza** *(state emblem, large star / star, 4 medium & 1 wide bar)*	**General'niy Kommissar GB** *(state emblem, large star)*	Field Marshal, Adm of Fleet
Glavniy Marshal A/AV/BtV/IV/VS (6) *(Large star & wreath)*	-	-	-
Marshal A/AV/BtV Marshal IV/VS (6) *(Large star)*	-	-	-
General Armii *(4 stars)*	**Admiral Flota** *(4 stars / star, 4 medium & 1 wide bar)*	**Kommissar GB 1-go ranga** General Armii (9) *(4 stars)*	Gen, Adm
General-Polkovnik A/AV/BtV/IV/VS General-Polkovnik IS/MS/VS/Yu General-Polkovnik TeV/IAvS/ IArS/ITaS *(3 stars)*	**Admiral** General-Polkovnik AV/BS/IAvS General-Polkovnik IS/MS/VS/Yu *(3 stars / star, 3 medium & 1 wide bar)*	**Kommissar GB 2-go ranga** General-Polkovnik (9) *(3 stars)*	Lt-Gen, Vice-Adm
General-Leytenant A/AV/BtV/IV/VS General-Leytenant IS/MS/VS/Yu General-Leytenant TeV/IAvS/IArS/ITaS *(2 stars)*	**Vitse-Admiral** General-Leytenant AV/BS/IAvS General-Leytenant IS/MS/VS/Yu *(2 stars / star, 2 medium & 1 wide bar)*	**Kommissar GB 3-go ranga** General-Leytenant *(2 stars)*	Maj-Gen, Rear-Adm
General-Mayor A/AV/BtV/IV/VS General-Mayor IS/MS/VS/Yu General-Mayor TeV/IAvS/IArS/ITaS *(1 star)*	**Kontr-Admiral** General-Mayor AV/BS/IAvS General-Mayor IS/MS/VS/Yu/ *(1 star / star, 3 medium & 1 wide bar)*	**Kommissar GB** General-Mayor *(1 star)*	Brig, Cdre
Starshiy komandniy sostav (Corps of Senior Commanders); 24.7.1943 Ofitserskiy sostav (Corps of Officers)			**Field officers**
Polkovnik AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Inzhener-Polkovnik (4) Polkovnik AvTS/ArTS *(3 stars, 2 stripes)*	**Kapitan 1-go ranga** Polkovnik AvTS Polkovnik AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(3 stars, 2 stripes / star, 1 wide bar)*	**Polkovnik GB** Polkovnik *(3 stars, 2 stripes)*	Col, Capt
Podpolkovnik AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Inzhener-Podpolkovnik Podpolkovnik AvTS/ArTS *(2 stars, 2 stripes)*	**Kapitan 2-go ranga** Podpolkovnik AvTS Podpolkovnik AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(2 stars, 2 stripes / star, 4 medium bars)*	**Podpolkovnik GB** Polkovnik *(2 stars, 2 stripes)*	Lt Col, Cdr
Mayor AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Inzhener-Mayor Mayor AvTS/ArTS *(1 star, 2 stripes)*	**Kapitan 3-go ranga** Mayor AvTS Mayor AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(1 star, 2 stripes / star, 3 medium bars)*	**Mayor GB** Mayor *(1 star, 2 stripes)*	Maj, Lt Cdr
Kapitan AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Inzhener-Kapitan Kapitan AvTS/ArTS *(4 stars, 1 stripe)*	**Kapitan-Leytenant** Kapitan AvTS Kapitan AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(4 stars, 1 stripe / star, 1 thin & 2 medium bars)*	**Kapitan GB** Kapitan *(3 stars, 2 stripes)*	Capt, Lt
Sredniy komandniy sostav (Corps of Intermediate Commanders); 27.7.1943 Ofitserskiy sostav (Corps of Officers)			**Subalterns**
Starshiy Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Starshiy Tekhnik-Leytenant (4) *(3 stars, stripe)*	**Starshiy Leytenant** Starshiy Leytenant Starshiy Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(3 stars, 1 stripe / star, 2 medium bars)*	**Starshiy Leytenant GB** Starshiy Leytenant *(3 stars, 1 stripe)*	Lt, Sub-Lt
Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Tekhnik-Leytenant *(2 stars, 1 stripe)*	**Leytenant** Leytenant Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(2 stars, 1 stripe / 1 thin & 1 medium bar)*	**Leytenant GB** Leytenant *(2 stars, 1 stripe)*	-
Mladshiy Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu Mladshiy Tekhnik-Leytenant *(1 star, 1 stripe)*	**Mladshiy Leytenant** Mladshiy Leytenant Mladshiy Leytenant AS/IS/MS/VS/Yu *(1 star, 1 stripe / star, 1 medium bar)*	**Mladshiy Leytenant** Madshiy Leytenant *(1 star, 1 stripe)*	2nd Lt, Acting Sub-Lt
Mladshiy komandniy sostav (Corps of Junior Commanders); 24.7.1943 Serzhantskiy sostav (Corps of Sergeants)			**NCOs**
Starshina AS/IS/MS/VS Starshina AvTS/ArTS/ITS *(1 thick bar, 1 stripe)*	**Michman** Starshina *(thick centre stripe)*	**Starshina SS** Starshina *(1 thick bar, 1 stripe)*	WOII, WO
Starshiy Serzhant AS/IS/MS/VS Starshiy Serzhant AvTS/ArTS/ITS (1 thick bar)	**Glavniy Starshina** Starshiy Serzhant (1 thick bar)	**Starshiy Serzhant SS** Starshiy Serzhant (1 thick bar)	Col-Sgt, CPO

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Table 4 (continued):

Serzhant AS/IS/MS/VS Serzhant AvTS/ArTS/ITS *(3 medium bars)*	**Starshina 1-y stat'i** Serzhant *(3 medium bars)*	**Serzhant SS** Serzhant *(3 medium bars)*	Sgt, PO
Mladshiy Serzhant AS/IS/MS/VS Mladshiy Serzhant AvTS/ArTS/ITS *(2 medium bars)*	**Starshina 2-y stat'i** Mladshiy Serzhant *(2 medium bars)*	**Mladshiy Serzhant** Mladshiy Serzhant *(2 medium bars)*	Cpl, LS
Ryadovoy sostav (Corps of Privates)			
Yefreytor - *(1 bar)*	**Starshiy Krasnoflotets** Yefreytor *(1 medium bar)*	- Yefreytor *(1 bar)*	L/Cpl, AB
Krasnoarmeyets - *(plain shoulder-strap)*	**Krasnoflotets** Krasnoarmeyets *(plain shoulder board)*	- Krasnoarmeyets *(plain shoulder board*	Pte, OS

Notes: (1) Combat branch rank suffixes: A = 'Artillerii' (Artillery); AV = 'Aviatsii' (Aviation); BS = Beregovoy Sluzhby (Coastal Service); BSBtV = 'Bronetankovykh Voysk' (Armour); IV= 'Inzhernykh Voysk' (Engineers); VS = 'Voysk Svyazi' (Signals).
(2) Non-combat branch rank suffixes: AS = 'Administrativnoy Sluzhby' (Administrative Service); IS = 'Intendantskoy Sluzhby' (Supply Service); MS = 'Meditsinskoy Sluzhby' (Medical Service); VS = 'Veterniarnoy Sluzhby' (Veterinary Service);
Yu = 'Yustitsii' (Legal Service).
(3) Engineering and Technical rank suffixes: AvTS = 'Aviatsionno-Tekhnicheskoy Sluzhby' (Aviation Technical Service);
ArTS = 'Artilleriysko-Tekhnicheskoy Sluzhby' (Artillery Technical Service); IArS = 'Inzherno-Artilleriyskoy Sluzhby' (Artillery Engineering Service); IAvS = 'Inzherno-Aviatsionnoy Sluzhby' (Aviation Engineering Service); ITaS = 'Inzherno-Tankovoy Sluzhby' (Armour Engineering Service); ITS = 'Inzherno-Tekhnicheskoy Sluzhby' (Engineer Technical Service); TeV = 'Tekhnicheskikh Voysk' (Technical Troops).
(4) 'Inzhener' field officer and 'Tekhnik' subaltern ranks were IAvS, IArS, ITaS, ITS and TeV, and Naval line Engineering (with naval titles) and Naval Construction.
(5) Seamen, Naval Infantry and line Engineering had naval titles.
(6) NKGB rank suffixes: GB = 'Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti' (State Security), often abbreviated to 'Gozbezopasnosti';
SS = 'Special'noy Sluzhby' (Special Service). These ranks were replaced by Army ranks 6.7.1945.
(7) NKVD Internal Troops also had Armour, Artillery, Motor Transport, Cavalry, Engineers, Signals, Air Force, Supply, Administrative, Medical, Veterinary, Engineer Technical and Legal personnel carrying the equivalent Army rank titles; the Naval Division had naval rank titles.
8) NKVD Border Troops also had Cavalry, Signals, Air Force, Supply, Administrative, Medical, Veterinary, Engineer Technical and Legal personnel carrying the equivalent Army rank titles; the Border Troops Coastguard had naval rank titles.
(9) NKVD Border Troops had no ranks at this level.

Table 5: Navy Officers' Branch Distinctions 15 Jan 1943 – 2 Sept 1945

Branch	Cuff rank bars	Button colour	Branch colour	Branch badge	Type of rank-title with example (all Rear-Admiral equivalents)
Seamen	Gold	Gold	Black	-	Navy; Kontr-Admiral
Coastal Service	-	Gold	Red	-	Army; General-Mayor BS (4)
Naval Infantry	-	Gold	Red	-	Kontr-Admiral
Naval Aviation	-	Gold	Light blue	-	General-Mayor Aviatsii
Line Engineers	Gold	Gold	Black	Spanner & wrench (pairs)	Inzhener-Kontr-Admiral
Naval Construction	-	Silver	Black	Spanner & wrench (pairs)	Inzhener-General-Mayor
Aviation Engineering Service	-	Silver	Light blue	Spanner & wrench (pairs) (3)	General-Mayor IAvS (4)
Aviation Technical Service	-	Silver	Light blue	Spanner & wrench (pairs)	Polkovnik ATS (4)
Supply Service	-	Silver	Crimson	-	General-Mayor IS (4)
Administration Service	-	Silver (1)	Crimson	-	Polkovnik AS (4)
Medical Service (military & medical training)	-	Silver	Red (2)	Chalice & snake (pairs)	General-Mayor MS (4)
Medical Service	-	Silver (1)	Red (2)	Chalice & snake (pairs)	General-Mayor MS (4)
Veterinary Service	-	Silver (1)	Red	Silver chalice & snake (pairs)	General-Mayor VS (4)
Legal officers	-	Silver (1)	Red	Shield on crossed swords	General-Mayor Yustitsii
Political officers	Branch	Branch	Branch	Branch	Branch

Notes:
(1) Officers wore narrow 4.5cm shoulder boards. (2) Field and subaltern officers had green shoulder-board centre-stripes.
(3) From 21.10.1944, gold winged propeller. (4) See Table 3, notes 1–3.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

***Leytenant* Konstantin Moiseev (left) poses with his Naval Aviation crew – their cap badges suggesting officer or *michman* rank – of an Ilyushin DB-3 long-range bomber. They are wearing M41 officers' service caps and a variety of clothing, including Moiseev's black M43 greatcoat with gold service-dress shoulder boards, a black leather greatcoat, and khaki flight overalls with large brown fur collars and lining. (Tschakov Collection)**

Branch distinctions

For the M43 dress uniform officers of the Seamen's, Coastal, Naval Infantry, Naval Aviation and line Engineering branches had gold buttons. This button-colour was repeated on the officers' peaked cap badge, chin cords and peak embroidery, officers' M43 and M45 dress uniforms, and braid M43 service shoulder boards. Seamen's and line Engineering branches wore cuff rank bars, other branches plain cuffs. There were branch-colour pipings on officers' M43 and M45 dress uniforms, and the piping and centre-stripes of M43 shoulder boards, and the latter bore metal branch badges.

Petty officers and seamen below *michman* wore red and yellow speciality sleeve badges. Unit cyphers in yellow stencil Cyrillic capital letters were worn on M43 shoulder boards and jumper shoulder patches, including the equivalents of: BF – Baltic Fleet; ChF – Black Sea Fleet; F – *Glavniy Starshina* or unassigned; SF – Arctic Fleet; TF – Pacific Fleet; AF – Amur Flotilla; KF – Caspian Flotilla; OF – Onega Flotilla; and VF – Volga Flotilla.

Rank insignia

Flag officers had 'hexagonal' service shoulder boards (i.e. clipped across inner corners and end) measuring 14–16cm x 0.65cm, in button-colour 'Russian braid'. These were worn on the M43 and M45 dress tunics, M43 black open-collar service tunic, blue and white closed-collar service tunics, greatcoat, raincoat and rubberized raincoat. Other officers wore 14–16cm x 0.6cm shoulder boards, and Medical, Veterinary, and Supply Service and Legal officers wore narrow 14–16cm x 4.5cm boards. In addition, Seamen's and line Engineering officers wore cuff rank insignia on the M43 and M45 dress tunics, M43 black open-collar and M43 blue closed-collar service tunics. These comprised a star, above narrow (0.6cm), medium (1.3cm) and wide (3.2cm) gold braid cuff bars, 8cm long. Seamen's and line Engineering officers' insignia are described below, with variations for other branches.

Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza (a 'combined arms' rank): Gold shoulder boards with black piping, and a red, gold and blue 4.2cm x 3.8cm M36 Soviet state emblem, above a 4.7cm gold star with a black unfouled anchor on a red pentagonal boss, all on black rays. On the cuffs, a 5cm diameter flag officers' black cloth star edged in gold wire with a gold wire hammer and sickle, above 4 medium bars and one wide bar.

Admiral Flota (a combined arms rank): Gold shoulder boards piped black, with 4x 0.22cm flag officers' stars. Cuff insignia as above.

Admiral – Kontr-Admiral: Button-colour shoulder boards piped in branch colour, with a metal branch badge above 3–1x 0.22cm flag officers' stars. Other branches had 3–1x 0.22cm button-colour plain stars. On the cuffs, a 5cm black cloth star edged in gold wire with a gold wire hammer and sickle, above 3–1x medium bars and one wide bar.

Kapitan I-go – 3-go ranga: Button-colour shoulder boards with branch-colour piping and two centre-stripes, with a metal branch-badge above 3–1x 0.22cm silver stars. On the cuffs, a 3cm gold braid star above 1 wide, 4–3 medium rings, or 1 narrow above 2 medium bars.

Kapitan-Leytenant – Mladshiy Leytenant: Button-colour shoulder boards with branch-colour piping and centre-stripe, with a metal branch-badge above 4–1x 0.13cm silver stars. On the cuffs, a 3cm gold braid star above

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

2 medium, 1 narrow above 1 medium rings, or 1 medium ring.

Michman – Glavniy Starshina: Black cloth 'pentagonal' shoulder boards with 3cm gold or yellow braid bars, on the officers' M43 dark blue and white cotton closed-collar service tunics and M24 seaman's black double-breasted greatcoat: for *michman* a longitudinal bar, for *glavniy starshina* a horizontal bar.

Starshina 1-y stat'i – Krasnoflotets: 3–0x 1cm gold or yellow transverse bars, on the shoulder boards of the M24 seamen's black greatcoat and M34 black pea-jacket, and on shoulder patches on the dark blue or white M43 jumper.

A group of Naval Infantry in 1945. They are wearing M34 *bezkozirka* caps with tallies reading 'SEVERNIY FLOT '(Northern Fleet) in gold Cyrillic capitals, black M34 double-breasted *bushlat* pea-jackets, blue-and-white striped vests and M34 black trousers. Visible weapons are PPSh-41 sub-machine guns and RGD-33 stick grenades; and note the continued use of Maxim MG canvas feed belts to carry cartridges – see Plate H3. (Tschakov Collection)

Seamen's branch personnel (from *admiral* down to *krasnoflotets*) belonging to ships awarded 'Guards' status prefixed their rank with *Gvardeyskogo Ekipazha* ('Guards Crew'), while personnel of other branches used the prefix *Gvardii*.

Cadets

Naval College officer cadets wore seamen's uniforms with rank titles from *kursant-starshina* to *kursant* and the corresponding enlisted rank insignia on M43 shoulder boards and shoulder patches (piped white from April 1945), above a gold fouled anchor. The three **Nakhimov Naval Schools** formed from 21 August 1943 were modelled on the Suvorov Schools; cadets wore seamen's uniforms with a Cyrillic 'N' on narrow M43 shoulder boards or shoulder patches, piped white from April 1945. Boys aged 13–17 could also serve in the VMF as a 'Boy' (*Yunga*), identified by narrow black shoulder boards with the Cyrillic cipher 'YU'.

Naval Infantry

Naval Infantry (*Morskaya Pekhota*) brigades both fought at the front and guarded the coast, naval bases and ports as part of the Coastal Service. However, by 1944 the VMF – particularly the Baltic Fleet – had re-absorbed most naval infantry into ships' crews, leaving only five brigades confirmed as seeing action: 3rd and 8th in Karelia, disbanded 1 January 1945; 12th on the Arctic Front; 255th in Crimea and the Balkans; and 260th in East Prussia in April 1945. There were also specially raised Naval Infantry Rifle Brigades (*Brigada Morskoi Strelkovy*); eight of these (numbered 70–72, 77, 79, 80, 83 & 85) fought in 1944 on the Karelian and Leningrad fronts, but in 1945 only two are still recorded – 83rd in Budapest in January, and 72nd in Prague in April. The Naval Infantry was disbanded soon after the war, though re-formed in 1963.

Initially Naval Infantry wore VMF uniforms, but later increasingly Red Army uniforms, with VMF caps and blue-and-white striped vests. Black M43 service shoulder boards piped red and bearing yellow fleet stencils and gold rank bars, or khaki field shoulder boards piped red with claret-red bars, were worn on the M43 field shirt. Distinctive Naval Infantry uniforms were adopted in March 1944. Officers and senior petty officers wore M43 Coastal Service service uniforms, and a khaki field uniform comprising a khaki M44 *pilotka* cap with white piping and khaki-painted badge, a khaki

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

M43 standing-collar service tunic with brown buttons and rank insignia on Army M43 khaki field shoulder boards. Seamen wore the M34 *bezkozirka* cap with a 'MORSKA PEKHOTA' ribbon tally, a khaki seaman's jumper with a wide blue collar edged white and M43 yellow rank bars, and a blue-and-white striped jumper with khaki trousers and black marching boots. Naval Infantry wore a yellow fouled anchor on a khaki cloth oval on the left upper sleeve of khaki field uniforms.

NKVD and NKGB FORCES

18 February 1943–2 September 1945

The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), commanded by *General'niy Komissar GB* Lavrentiy Pavlovich Beriya, was divided into two main sections: NKVD Internal Troops, and NKVD Frontier Guards. Beriya also retained control of the independent People's Commissariat of State Security (NKGB). NKVD and NKGB personnel adopted the Red Army M43 uniform from 18 February 1943, with certain variations. Initially officers wore 'bottle-shaped' service shoulder boards, but later in 1943 changed to 'hexagonal' service and field boards, while NCOs and men wore the Army's 'pentagonal' pattern. Red Army Guards personnel transferred to the NKVD retained their *Gvardeskiy* rank-title prefixes.

State Security

The People's Commissariat of State Security (*Narodnyi Komissariat Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – NKGB) was formed 14 April 1943 as a separate ministry under *Komissar 1-go ranga* GB Vsevolod Nikolayevich Merkulov. The task of NKGB officers was to crush all political opposition, supervising mass arrests, deportations and executions. The NKGB was redesignated a Ministry (*Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – MGB) in March 1946, and would become a Committee (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – KGB) on 13 March 1954.

NKGB officers wore the NKVD service peaked cap and general officers' M43 and M45 dress uniforms, with medium ('cornflower') blue branch piping and facings. The khaki M43 NKGB field officers' six-button single-breasted dress tunic had medium blue piping on the collar, front edge, pointed cuffs and shoulder boards; double 'guards braids' on medium blue collar patches, and two vertical 'guards braids' piped in medium blue in the cuffs. Subaltern officers had a single 'guards braid' on the collar and cuff. NCOs had Army-style style gold braid stripes on medium blue collar patches, and plain cuffs piped medium blue. In 1945, officers and NCOs adopted M43 Army-pattern five-button single-breasted tunics, officers adding straight cuffs. The M43 officers' khaki service tunic had medium blue piping on the collar, straight cuffs and shoulder boards.

From 6 July 1945, NKGB personnel changed their M43 rank titles for Red Army titles, Beriya becoming a *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza*. On their M43 service tunics and service greatcoats officers wore gold braid service shoulder boards piped medium blue with gold rank stars (coloured M36 state emblem and large silver star for *General'niy Komissar GB*), with a light blue centre-stripe, and a light blue zigzag centre-stripe for general officers. The khaki field shoulder boards had medium blue piping, light blue

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

May 1945: a *starshina* (left) and a *Gvardii starshiy serzhant* (right) of the NKVD Internal Troops. Both are wearing M35 medium blue service-dress caps with dark red bands and crown piping, and M22 red star badges. Despite their ranks they sport officers' M43 khaki woollen field shirts with breast pockets; their M43 khaki field shoulder boards have dark red piping, rank bars and stripes. They also wear officers' M38 brown leather belts with cross braces, and *vatnie sharovari* breeches. The cavalry swords (suspended by a strap over the right shoulder by the *starshina*, and from the belt by his companion), indicate cavalrymen. The *starshina* also carries a ceremonial dirk, and displays the Order of Glory. His companion wears the M42 Guards badge, indicating service in an Army Guards unit and entitling him to the *Gvardii* rank prefix. He also has two yellow 'serious wound' stripes, and two campaign medals. (Tschakov Collection)

centre-stripes, and silver (l944, gold) stars. NCOs had medium blue service shoulder boards piped dark red with gold rank bars, and khaki field shoulder boards piped medium blue with dark red rank bars. Service collar patches were dark red piped in medium blue, field patches khaki piped in medium blue.

NKVD Internal Troops

The ten Chief Directorates of NKVD Internal Troops (*Vnutrenniye Voiska*) were commanded by *General-Polkovnik* (*General Armii*, 28 July 1944) Ivan I. Maslennikov. Internal Troops served under Red Army command in NKVD operational divisions, of which 59 existed in this period: five Motorized – 1, 2, 7, 8 & 13; 18 Rifle – 3–6, 9, 10, 19, 57–66, & Grozny; 13 Railway Security – 22–34; seven Special Installation Security – 14–18, 20 & 21; one Special Installation and Railway Security – 31; and 15 Convoy Troops Security – 35–39, 45–53 & 56. In addition, six ex-NKVD Rifle Divisions initially served in the 70th 'NKVD' Army as Army rifle divisions numbered 102, 106, 140, 161, 17 and 181.

NKVD Internal Troops general officers wore the M43 medium blue service peaked cap with a dark red band and crown piping, the M40 Army badge, and gold chin cords; other ranks had the M22 red star badge and a black patent leather chin strap. The general officers' M43 dark blue double-breasted dress tunic had medium blue piping, gold wire edging and gold

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

laurel embroidery on the collar, repeated in a diamond design on the cuffs, and medium blue front piping. The M43 gold braid service shoulder boards piped in medium blue had silver rank stars. The M45 dress tunic was the same but in dark green. The M43 dark blue breeches and trousers had a medium blue piping and two wide stripes. The M43 khaki dress tunic for officers, NCOs and men was the same as for the NKGB but was double-breasted, with two rows of six gold buttons, straight cuffs piped medium blue, and dark red collar patches, on which field and subaltern officers had double or single gold 'guards braids' respectively, NCOs a horizontal gold stripe, and men a plain patch.

Officers' gold service shoulder boards had medium blue piping and centre-stripes, and silver branch badges and rank stars. Khaki field boards had medium blue piping and centre-stripes, and silver (1944, gold) branch badges and rank stars. NCOs and men had dark red service shoulder boards piped in medium blue, with gold rank bars and (occasionally) yellow stencil unit designations; their khaki field boards were piped in dark red, with claret-red rank bars. Service collar patches were dark red piped in medium blue, field patches khaki piped in dark red. Red Army Infantry, Armour, Artillery, Motor Transport, Cavalry, Engineers, Signals and Air Force branch badges were worn on service and field shoulder boards. Supply, Administrative, Medical, Veterinary, Engineering-Technical and Legal officers wore silver braid and NCOs' rank bars on service shoulder boards with medium blue piping and centre-stripes. The Naval Division wore M43 naval uniforms and insignia.

NKVD Border Troops

The Border Troops (*Pogranichnyie Voiska*) were commanded by *General-Mayor* (November 1944, *General-Leytenant*) Nikolai Pavlovich Stakhanov from February 1942. From 8 April 1944, with Axis troops still controlling territories claimed by Stalin, the Border District organization was re-established. By 2 September 1945 there were 19 border districts, each usually under a *general-mayor*: Azerbaijanian, Armenian, Baltic (Estonia and Latvia), Black Sea, Byelorussian, Carpathian, Central Asian, Eastern (Kazakhstan), Far Eastern, Georgian, Karelo-Finnish, Kirgiz, Leningrad, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Pacific, Transbaikal, Turkmenistan and Ukrainian. The basic unit was the Border Detachment with 1,500–2,000 men; 94 of these existed during the war, and about 30 deployed on combat operations.

NKVD Border Troops wore the M35 green and medium blue service peaked cap, air units adding the M38 Air Force insignia. Otherwise they wore NKVD Internal Troops' M43 and M45 double-breasted dress uniforms, and M43 service and field uniforms, with green pipings and facings. Officers wore gold service shoulder boards or khaki field boards, with green piping and centre-stripes and silver rank stars. NCOs and men had green service shoulder boards piped dark red, with gold rank bars and yellow stencil detachment numbers, and khaki field shoulder boards piped green, with dark red rank bars. Service collar patches were green piped in dark red, field patches khaki piped in green. Red Army Infantry, Cavalry, Signals, and Air Force branch badges were worn on service and field shoulder boards; Supply, Administrative, Medical, Veterinary, Engineering-Technical and Legal officers wore silver braid and NCOs' rank bars, on service shoulder boards with green piping and centre-stripes. Coastguard Patrol Brigades wore Navy M43 uniforms and insignia.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

PLATE COMMENTARIES

A: ARMED FORCES COMMANDERS

A1: *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Iosif V. Stalin, May 1944

Stalin wears the light grey M43 general officers' dress uniform with red 'combined arms' piping and rich gold oakleaf embroidery on the cap band, tunic collar and cuffs, and the state emblem and marshal's large star on his shoulder boards. On his right breast he displays the Order of Suvorov 1st Class, and on his left the Hero of the Soviet Union, Order of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, the (undeserved) Red Army Twenty Years' Service Medal, the Moscow Defence Medal and the Order of Victory.

A2: *Admiral Flota* Nikolai G. Kuznetzov, June 1944

The Navy C-in-C wears the M43 flag officers' black dress uniform, including the M41 peaked cap and M41 dress tunic with M43 shoulder boards; his dress dirk is suspended from the M41 gold braid belt. On his right breast is the Order of the Red Star, on his left the Orders of Lenin and the Red Banner and the Twenty Years' Service Medal.

A3: *Glavniy Marshal Aviatsii* Aleksandr A. Novikov, April 1945

The Air Force C-in-C wears the M43 service uniform with the chief marshal's wreathed star on his shoulder boards. His decorations are the gold star of a Hero of the Soviet Union, and five Orders – two of Lenin, Suvorov 1st Class, Red Banner, and Red Banner of Labour. Stalin had Novikov arrested on 22 April 1946, but he was reinstated on 29 June 1953 following the dictator's death.

B: NORTHERN THEATRE, 1944

B1: *Serzhant*, 372nd Rifle Division; Vyborg, June 1944

This NCO of the 1240th Rifle Regt during the recapture of Vyborg from Finnish troops wears the M43 summer field uniform, with the SSh-40 helmet. The M43 summer field shirt in light khaki cotton has khaki field shoulder boards piped in infantry crimson (officially 'raspberry red'), with three rank bars in dark red ('claret'). His cotton summer trousers are tucked into enlisted ranks' marching boots. He carries a gasmask bag for food and small equipment, an F-1 canvas grenade bag and a canvas magazine pouch for his PPSh-42 sub-machine gun. On his right breast are the M43 Excellent Reconnaissance Scout badge, and two red bars for 'light wounds'; on his left he displays the Leningrad Defence Medal.

B2: *Polkovnik*, Artillery, 115th Rifle Division; Novgorod, January 1944

This officer commanded 313th Field Artillery Regt in the Novgorod-Luga operation that lifted the siege of Leningrad. He wears the M43 officers' service uniform with an M43 colonel's lambswool *papakha* cap. His grey service greatcoat has gold braid shoulder boards piped in Artillery red with the crossed-cannons branch badge, and Artillery black velvet collar patches piped in red.

B3: *Starshiy Leytenant*, Naval Infantry, Baltic Fleet; Estonia, September 1944

This deputy company commander of an independent battalion during the re-occupation of the Baltic states wears M44 Naval Infantry field uniform, with an M44 officers' khaki *pilotka* sidecap piped white, and M44 closed-collar tunic.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Semyon K. Timoshenko is pictured here in June 1945, wearing the light grey M43 generals' dress uniform with gold cap band, collar (and cuff) embroidery, and the gold braid shoulder boards of this rank; compare with Plate A1. He wears on his right breast the Order of Victory, at his throat the marshal's large star, and on his left breast the Hero of the Soviet Union star above two Orders of Lenin, three Orders of the Red Banner, and the Twenty Years' Service medal. Following his disappointing performance commanding the North-Western Front at Demyansk in February 1943, Timoshenko never again held a field command. (Author's collection)

His Army field shoulder boards are piped red, with silver rank stars. Note the Naval Infantry's anchor sleeve badge in gold, Army officers' brown leather field equipment, and the Navy cap badge and belt plate painted brown. Yellow and red bars below the Order of the Red Star on his right breast indicate 'serious' and 'light' wounds; he also displays the Leningrad Defence Medal.

C: CENTRAL & SOUTHERN THEATRES, 1944

C1: *Gvardii Krasnoarmeyets*, 25th Guards Tank Brigade; Minsk, July 1944

This tank crewman is serving with 5th Guards Tank Army during the destruction of German Army Group Centre in Operation 'Bagration'. He wears a grey M34 padded helmet, and grey M35 tank overalls over his M43 khaki woollen field shirt. Note the Guards badge on his right breast. His personal weapon is a 7.62mm Tokarev TT-30 pistol, its holster suspended from a cross strap.

C2: *Kapitan*, 211th Rifle Division; Dukla Pass, September 1944

This company commander in 894th Rifle Regt is depicted enjoying a glass of tea and a smoke during 38th Army's breakthrough into eastern Slovakia. He wears the M43 officers' field uniform, with the M40 field peaked cap and M43 woollen field shirt; the field shoulder boards are piped Infantry crimson, with a dark red centre-stripe and silver insignia. He wears M35 officers' leather field equipment with a service uniform belt, a holstered 7.62mm Mosin-Nagant M1895 revolver, a map case and binocular case. He has been awarded two yellow 'serious wound' bars, sewn on below his Order of the Red Star.

C3: *Leytenant*, 224th Ground Attack Air Division; Brody, July 1944

This Ilyushin Il-2 Shturmovik pilot of 2nd Air Army fought under 1st Ukrainian Front to recapture the north-western Ukraine during the Lvov-Sandomierz Offensive. He wears the M43 light summer field uniform without branch-colour piping – an M41 *pilotka* sidecap, M43 officers' field shirt and breeches. He displays the M24 pilot's qualification 'wings' on his left sleeve; his field shoulder boards are piped Air Force light blue, with a dark red centre-stripe and silver insignia. He has a TT-30 pistol holstered on his belt under the PL-3M parachute harness.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

D: SOUTHERN THEATRE, 1944

D1: *General-Mayor Meditsinskoy Sluzhby*, 46th Army; Budapest, December 1944

The commander of 46th Army's medical services wears the M43 medical general officers' service uniform. His M41 officers' service-dress cap has a dark green band, red piping, and a 'non-combat' silver cap badge and chin cords. The service tunic, in rough khaki cloth for wear without a greatcoat, is piped red at collar and cuffs; the shoulder boards are the narrow type for Services officers. His blue service-dress breeches have a general officer's red double stripes and piping. Note his revolver; the Geneva Convention offered no protection on the Russian Front.

D2: *General-Mayor*, 5th Air Army; Romania, August 1944

This general, at Army HQ during the Iasi-Kishinev offensive, wears the M43 officer's service uniform with M40 field peaked cap and M43 field tunic. His field shoulder boards are in khaki silk braid. Only the barely visible light blue piping on his tunic collar and cuffs and the seams of his breeches identify him as an Air Force officer. His five medal ribbons show the Orders of the Patriotic War 2nd Class and the Red Banner, the Kiev Defence Medal 1941, the Order of the Red Star, and the Caucasus Defence Medal 1943.

D3: *Starshiy Leytenant*, 62nd NKVD Rifle Division; Belgrade, December 1944

This is a deputy battery commander of divisional artillery with a formation serving under 3rd Ukrainian Front. He wears the NKVD M35 medium blue and dark red service cap with Army field uniform, including the M41 field greatcoat. His 'hexagonal' NKVD M43 gold braid service shoulder boards, piped medium blue, bear the Artillery branch badge and rank stars. His service collar patches are dark red piped in medium blue.

E: CENTRAL, SOUTHERN & NORTHERN THEATRES, 1945

E1: *Gvardii Mladshiy Serzhant*, 47th Guards Tank Brigade; Warsaw, January 1945

This section commander serving with 2nd Guards Tank Army is prepared for dismounted combat. He wears M43 winter field uniform with the M40 'Finnish' fleece cap (note subdued brown-painted cap star), M43 enlisted ranks' greatcoat and felt *valenki* boots. The greatcoat has concealed buttons; the khaki field collar patches and shoulder boards have Armoured Troops red piping, and the rank bars are claret-red. He wears his Guards badge, and carries a PPSh-41 sub-machine gun, a pouch for a spare drum magazine, and a gasmask bag for sundry equipment.

E2: *Yefreytor*, Airfield Battalion; Vienna, April 1945

This infantryman of an airfield defence battalion with 17th Air Army wears the M40 cap, an M42 reinforced canvas over-jacket, M44 reinforced canvas trousers, and khaki puttees with ankle boots. His khaki M43 field collar patches and shoulder boards have light blue Air Force piping, and a dark red rank bar on the latter. He holds a Degtyarev PTRD 14.5mm anti-tank rifle, but has minimal field equipment: one set of M37 rifle ammunition pouches, and a gasmask bag. His entrenching tool is useful as a close-combat weapon.

E3: *Kapitan 3-go ranga* Aleksandr I. Marinesko, Baltic Fleet, January 1945

Marinesko's submarine S-13 torpedoed the German liner *Wilhelm Gustloff* on 30 January 1945 during the evacuation of Courland; about 9,300 servicemen and civilian refugees lost their lives – the greatest single loss in maritime history, and, because of the high civilian death toll, an embarassment even by the merciless standards of the Great Patriotic War. Of mixed Romanian-Ukrainian parentage, Marinesko was an undisciplined alcoholic who regularly falsified or exaggerated his successes, and he believed that the Soviet cover-up of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* incident robbed him of the recognition he deserved. Dismissed from the Navy in September 1945, he died in 1963. Here Marinesko wears the black M34 officer's sidecap with white piping, and M43 service uniform, with a holstered Tokarev TT-33 pistol on his black leather field belt. As an officer of the Seamen's branch he wears gold shoulder boards striped with black, and gold cuff bars beneath a star. He displays the M43 submarine commander's breast badge.

F: CENTRAL EUROPE, 1945

F1: *Gvardii Starshina*, 10th Guards Cavalry Division; Prague, May 1945

This squadron sergeant-major serving with the 1st Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group is looting Czech civilian wristwatches. He wears a Kuban Cossack kubanka cap and red-piped baggy blue trousers, with a standard-issue M43 light khaki cotton summer field shirt. He has soft leather Cossack boots, and carries a shashka sabre and a small plaited whip. Otherwise he shows standard Cavalry items: blue service shoulder boards piped black with gold rank bars, and the officers' field equipment used by this rank. He displays the Guards badge, and the Caucasus Defence and Twenty Years' Service medals.

F2: *Mladshiy Serzhant*, 58th Guards Rifle Division; Torgau, 25 April 1945

This female NCO is on traffic duty in the Saxon town where this division of 5th Guards Army met the US Army's 69th Infantry Division on 'Elbe Day'. She wears an M41 khaki skirt, but otherwise male clothing: an M35 *pilotka* and M43 field shirt. Her khaki field shoulder boards are piped Infantry crimson, with claret-red rank bars. Note the brassard displaying the Military Traffic Regulator sleeve diamond. She carries traffic-directing flags, but also a PPSh-41 and a magazine pouch.

F3: *Yefreytor*, 150th Rifle Division; Berlin, 30 April 1945

This member of a 756th Infantry Regt anti-tank platoon, supporting infantrymen storming the Reichstag, wears M43 enlisted ranks' summer field uniform with the SSh-40 helmet. His field shirt displays the M42 anti-tank crew sleeve diamond, but his service-dress shoulder boards are non-regulation, in Artillery black piped in red, with (hidden by his gasmask bag sling) a gold rank bar and branch badge. Typically lightly equipped, he has a slung SVT-40 7.62mm semi-automatic rifle, and carries an APHE shell for the M43 ZiS AT gun.

G: MOSCOW VICTORY PARADE, 24 JUNE 1945

G1: *Marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza* Georgiy K. Zhukov

At the high point of his career, Zhukov rode out from the Kremlin's Spassky Gate on a white charger, to meet the

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

parade commander Marshal Rokossovskiy and review the parading troops. His theatrical 'triumph' attracted the admiration of the world, but also Stalin's jealousy, and Zhukov subsequently languished as a Military District commander until the dictator's death in March 1953. He wears the general officers' new M45 'Tsarist green' dress uniform with red piping and rich gold embroidery. His galaxy of orders and decorations includes the Victory over Germany Medal on its black-and-orange ribbon, the French Croix de Guerre and Lègion d'Honneur, Polish Virtuti Militari, United States Legion of Merit, and the Mongolian Khalkin-Gol Medal. He carries the M40 general officers' parade sword.

G2: *Gvardii Mayor*, 2nd Guards Tank Corps

This battalion commander, carrying the corps standard of red edged with purple, wears the M43 officers' khaki dress uniform with the SSh-40 helmet. His tunic collar has a field officer's double gold bars zigzagged with silver, on the Armoured Troops black facing patch, and on his cuffs are two 'guards braids' worked on black (note that these Germanic-looking braids were not particular to Guards units, but were part of this uniform for officers of all arms). His collar, shoulder boards, cuffs and breeches seams are piped in red. On his right breast are the Guards badge, three red wound bars, and the Orders of the Red Star and Patriotic War 1st Class; on the left he displays several campaign medals.

G3: *Komissar Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti 3-go ranga*, NKGB

This security police general is wearing the M45 NKVD general officers' dark green dress uniform. His M35 service cap has a medium blue crown and dark red band and piping, with the gold laurel-leaf embroidery for Army, Air Force and NKVD general officers below the rank of *marshal Sovetskogo Soyuza*. The tunic cuffs have a diamond arrangement of laurel embroidery. The gold shoulder boards have a light blue zigzag centre-stripe. This officer wears the Patriotic War Medal 2nd Class, the Distinguished NKVD Member badge, the Orders of Lenin and the Red Banner, and the Victory over Germany Medal.

NKVD troops were still operating against anti-Soviet guerrilla armies in the Baltic States, Ukraine and Poland as late as 1956, and this sometimes involved major engagements. For instance, on 18 August 1945 at Bielsk Podlaski in eastern Poland, NKVD *Major* Boris Gribko was killed when his mixed force – 4th Rifle Co, 267th NKVD Rifle Regt, with Polish Army and Security (UB) elements – was defeated in an ambush by 1st Bn, 5th Vilnius Bde of the Polish Home Army.

H: MANCHURIA, AUGUST 1945

H1: *Starshiy Serzhant*, NKVD Border Troops, Harbin

This NCO from Pacific Border District wears the enlisted ranks' service uniform, comprising the Border Troops' red-piped M35 green and medium blue peaked cap, and an M43 field shirt. The green shoulder boards are piped Infantry crimson, with gold rank bars and the branch badge. He wears the Order of the Red Star and the Victory over Germany Medal.

H2: *Serzhant*, 384th Rifle Division, Changchun

This 25th Army formation reached the Manchukuo capital on 20 August. He wears the M43 summer field uniform: an M38 '*panama*' hat with M40 star badge, a field shirt with officers'-style breast pockets, and service-dress shoulder boards with gold rank bars; an Excellent Reconnaissance Scout badge is pinned on his right breast. He wears M37 rifle ammunition pouches for his semi-automatic SKS rifle, and is observing Japanese positions through an optical range-finder.

Outside the Kremlin's Spassky Gate, privates of the specially formed Flag Disposal Battalion of the 1st 'Felix Dzerzhinsky' Rifle Division, NKVD Internal Troops, drag captured German regimental flags across the wet cobbles of Red Square during the Victory Parade on 24 June 1945, before tossing them into a pile to symbolize Soviet contempt for the defeated Third Reich. They are dressed in M43 NKVD khaki parade tunics with gold collar braids, and dark blue trousers (compare with the Red Army equivalent uniform, Plate G2). Note that the nearest man carries a flagless staff of the élite 1st Waffen-SS Panzer Division 'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler'. (Tschakov Collection)

H3: *Mladshiy Serzhant*, Naval Infantry, Pacific Fleet, Mukden

This NCO in Mukden (now Shenyang) wears an M39 Navy *bezkozirka* cap with a Pacific Fleet ribbon tally, and a seaman's striped vest under an Army M43 field shirt and M44 trousers. His black M43 service shoulder boards are piped in red and bear gold rank bars and a yellow Cyrillic 'TF' fleet stencil. He wears the Order of the Red Star on his right breast, and the yellow Naval Infantry badge on his left sleeve. He carries an MG spares pouch and a pistol holster on his Navy belt, and slung MG ammunition belts – though his weapon is a magazine-fed M28 Degtyarev 7.62mm LMG.

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

INDEX

References to illustrations are shown in **bold**. Plates are shown with page and caption locators in brackets.

Air Force 24–35, **34**, **35**, 38–39, **40**, **A3** (45), **C3** (45), **D2** (46), **E2** (46)
aircraft **34**, **35**, **40**
airfield battalions **E2** (46)
anti-tank units **F3** (46)
Antonov, *General* Aleksei Innokentevich 4, **4**
armies and groups 6–8
artillery
  organization 10, 12–13
  self-propelled guns **9**
  uniforms 18, **B2** (45), **D3** (46)

Beriya, Lavrentiy Pavlovich 42
Berlin, battle for (1945) **11**, **12**, **14**, **F3** (46)
branches 4

campaigns and operations 13–15, 35–36
cavalry
  organization 10, 12
  uniforms 18, **F1** (46)
corps 8–10
Cossacks 18, **F1** (46)

decorations **3**, **4**, **17**, **18**, **23**, **24**, **35**, **45**, **A** (45), **G** (46–47)
divisions 10–13
Dobysh, *Gvardii Polkovnik* F.I. **34**

entrenching tools **11**
equipment **B1** (45), **C2** (45), **E2** (46)

fronts 5, 7

Germany
  flags and standards **47**
  prisoners of war **8**
  surrender 3
Glinka, *Major* Boris **35**
Guards units **15**, **18**, **23**, **24**, **C1** (45), **E1** (46), **F1** (46), **F2** (46), **G2** (47)

Harbin **15**
headgear
  Air Force 34–35, **34**, **35**, **40**, **C3** (45), **D2** (46), **E2** (46)
  Cossack **F1** (46)
  generals' dress **45**
  land forces overview 16
  M34 tank helmets **9**, **14**, **16**, **C1** (45)
  M35 NKVD caps **D3** (46)
  M35 service-dress caps **22**
  M35 sidecaps **18**, **22**, **24**, **F2** (46)
  M38 'panama' hats **H2** (47)
  M40 fleece caps **9**, **10**, **17**, **E1** (46), **E2** (46)
  M40 peaked caps **C2** (45)
  M42 fleece caps **9**, **10**, **17**, **21**, **24**
  M43 caps **B1** (45)
  Navy 36–42, **37**, **40**, **41**, **B3** (45), **E3** (46), **H3** (47)
  NKVD/NKGB 42–44, **43**, **D3** (46), **G3** (47), **H1** (47)
  SSh-40 helmets **13**, **B1** (45), **F3** (46), **G2** (47)

insignia, rank
  Air Force 38–39
  land forces 22–23, 38–39
  Navy 38–39, 40–41
  NKVD/NKGB 42–44
Isakov, *Admiral* Ivan S. 35

Klubov, *Kapitan* Aleksandr **35**
Kuznetsov, *Admiral* Nikolai G. 35, **A2** (45)

land forces 3–23
Leningrad, siege of (1941–44) **5**

Manchuria 15, **15**, **16**, **H** (47)
map cases **14**
Marinesko, *Kapitan* Aleksandr I. **E3** (46)
Maslennikov, *General* Ivan I., 43
medical officers **D1** (46)
Merkulov, *Kommissar* Vsevolod Nikolayevich 42
military districts 4
Moiseev, *Leytenant* Konstantin **40**
Moscow Victory Parade (1945) **G** (46–47), **47**
Motor Rifles units **10**
Mzachih, *Podpolkovnik* P.G. **23**

Navy 35–42, **37**, **40**, **41**, **B3** (45), **E3** (46), **H3** (47)
NCOs 4, **13**, **24**, **B1** (45), **F1** (46), **F2** (46), **H** (47)
NKGB 42–44, **G3** (47)
NKVD **8**, 38–39, 42–44, **43**, **D3** (46), **H1** (47), **47**
Novikov, *Marshal* Aleksandr A. 24, **A3** (45)

officers
  recruitment 4
  see also insignia, rank; uniforms
operations *see* campaigns and operations
organization
  Air Force 24–34
  land forces 3–13

partisans 13

Rechkalov, *Kapitan* Grigoriy **35**
rifle units **B1** (45), **B2** (45), **C2** (45), **D3** (46), **F2** (46), **F3** (46), **H2** (47)
Rokossovsky, *Marshal* Konstantin Konstantinovich **6**, 47

Serikov, *Serzhant* I.D. **24**
Shanina, Roza Yegerovna **3**
snipers **3**
Soviet Union: borders 3
Stakhanov, *General-Major* Nikolai Pavlovich 44
Stalin, Iosif V. 3–4, **A1** (45), 47
strategic directions 5

tanks **5**, **37**
  organization 8–9, 12
  uniforms **9**, **14**, **16**, 18, **23**, **24**, **C1** (45), **E1** (46), **F1** (46), **G2** (47)
Timoshenko, *Marshal* Semyon K. **45**
traffic controllers **9**, **F2** (46)
training 4
Trud, *Starshiy Leytenant* Andrey **35**

uniforms
  Air Force 34–35, **34**, **35**, **40**, **A3** (45), **C3** (45), **D2** (46), **E2** (46)
  branch distinctions 20–21, 33, 39, 40
  branch-specific 18–20
  cadets 20, 23, 41
  camouflage **5**, **20**
  commanders **6**, **A** (45), **45**, **G** (46–47)
  dress uniforms **4**, **A** (45), **45**, **G** (46–47)
  land forces officers **4**, **10**, **13**, 16–23, **17**, **18**, **22**, **23**, **B2** (45), **C2** (45)
  land forces overview 16–23
  legwear and footwear **3**, **13**, 17–18, **E1**, (46), **E2** (46), **F1** (46)
  M29 leather jackets **22**
  M31 sheepskin-lined coats **10**
  M34 leather jackets **14**
  M41 greatcoats **10**, **22**
  M41 quilted jackets **12**, **22**
  M43 field shirts **3**, **13**, **14**, **17**, **24**, **C1** (45), **F1** (46), **F2** (46)
  M43 greatcoats **21**, **E1** (46)
  M43 overjackets **9**
  M43 tunics **14**, **23**
  Naval Infantry 41–42, **41**, **H3** (47)
  Navy 36–42, **37**, **40**, **A2** (45), **B3** (45), **E3** (46)
  NCOs **13**, **24**, **B1** (45), **F1** (46), **F2** (46), **H** (47)
  overalls **5**, **14**, **16**, **18**, **20**, **24**, **C1** (45)
  skirts **3**, **F2** (46)
  summer **11**, **B1** (45), **F1** (46), **F3** (46), **H2** (47)
  women **3**, **9**, **18**, 20, 36, **F2** (46)
  see also headgear; insignia, rank

Vasilevskiy, *Marshal* Aleksandr 4
vehicles
  half-tracks **10**
  scout cars **24**

weapons
  anti-tank **E2** (46)
  grenades **24**, **41**
  Panzerfaust 30 **24**
  parade swords **G1** (46–47)
  pistols **C1** (45)
  revolvers **C2** (45)
  rifles **3**, **13**, **22**, **F3** (46)
  sabres **F1** (46)
  sub-machine guns **13**, **18**, **20**, **21**, **24**, **41**, **E1** (46), **F2** (46)
  whips **F1** (46)
Weissenfels **14**
Wilhelm Gustloff, 46
women **3**, **9**, **18**, 20, 36, **F2** (46)

Zhukov, *Marshal* Georgiy K. 4, **G1** (46–47)

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

Related Titles - Men-at-Arms Series

epub ISBN	PDF ISBN	No.	TITLE
9781780967684	9781780968261	3	Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders
9781780967691	9781780968278	10	The Buffs
9781782001263	9781782001577	14	The English Civil War Armies
9781780967707	9781780968285	15	Foot Grenadiers
9781780967714	9781780968292	32	United States Marine Corps
9781780967721	9781780968308	33	The US Cavalry
9781782001485	9781782001713	37	The Army of Northern Virginia
9781780967875	9781780968414	40	The British Army of the Crimea
9781780965499	9781780965505	45	Napoleon's Polish Troops
9781780963655	9781780963648	86	Samurai Armies 1550–1615
9781849089623	9781846036989	183	Modern African Wars (1)
9781849089616	9781846037009	202	Modern African Wars (2)
9781780961385	9781846037016	209	The War in Cambodia 1970–75
9781849089609	9781849089531	242	Modern African Wars (3)
9781780962399	9781780962481	432	Japanese Special Naval Landing Forces
9781780963402	9781780963396	434	World War II German Police Units
9781780963532	9781780963525	437	The Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection
9781780962344	9781780962467	442	Queen Victoria's Highlanders
9781780963341	9781846037955	449	The Royal Hungarian Army in World War II
9781780963600	9781849080965	453	Armies of the East India Company 1750–1850
9781780963662	9781846038945	455	US Armed Forces in China 1856–1941
9781780963631	9781849081825	458	Army of the Republic of Vietnam 1955–75
9781780962375	9781849083270	461	French Foreign Legion 1872–1914
9781780962856	9781849084840	465	Brazilian Expeditionary Force in World War II
9781849088282	9781849084215	468	World War II Soviet Armed Forces (2)
9781849089371	9781849085427	470	Roman Centurions 753–31 BC
9781849089388	9781849084581	471	Adowa Campaign
9781849089395	9781849085083	472	Irish Rebellion
9781849088886	9781849085403	473	New Zealand Expeditionary Force 1914–19
9781849089012	9781849084178	474	The Chaco War 1932–35
9781849089029	9781849085984	475	Spanish Army in North America c.1700–1783

OSPREY
PUBLISHING

© Osprey Publishing • www.ospreypublishing.com

First published in Great Britain in 2012 by Osprey Publishing,
Midland House, West Way, Botley, Oxford, OX2 0PH, UK
44-02 23rd Street, Suite 219, Long Island City, NY 11101, USA
E-mail: info@ospreypublishing.com

OSPREY PUBLISHING IS PART OF THE OSPREY GROUP

© 2012 Osprey Publishing Ltd.

All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner. Enquiries should be addressed to the Publishers.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Print ISBN: 978 1 84908 634 9
PDF ebook ISBN: 978 1 84908 635 6
ePub ebook ISBN: 978 1 78096 428 7

Editor: Martin Windrow
Page layout by Melissa Orrom Swan, Oxford
Index by Alison Worthington
Typeset in Helvetica Neue and ITC New Baskerville
Originated by PDQ Media, Bungay, UK
Printed in China through Worldprint Ltd.

12 13 14 15 16 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Osprey Publishing is supporting the Woodland Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, by funding the dedication of trees.

www.ospreypublishing.com

Dedication

This book is respectfully dedicated to the late
LtCdr Maitland Thornton, MBE, RD, RNR (Retired)
(1926–2010) – a great inspiration over many years

Author's Note

For reasons of relative space, the separation of this subject into three volumes by years cannot be exactly consistent with regards to organization, operations, and uniform practices alike. Other examples of uniform and insignia introduced by the 1943 regulations described in this text are illustrated in the second volume, Men-at-Arms 468.

Acknowledgements

Nigel Thomas would like to thank Ventsislav Chakov, Nik Cornish and László Pál Szabó for their assistance and inspiration, and also his wife Heather for her tireless encouragement and support. He would also like to acknowledge his debt to the writings of László Békési, John Ellis, Aleksandr Kibovskiy, Chris Nelson, Nikolay O. Roginskiy, Jan Rutkiewicz, Anton I. Shalito, Iliya Y. Savchenkov, Aleksey Stepanov, Kirill V. Tsiplenkov, David Webster and Steven Zaloga.
For further information on Nigel Thomas or to contact him, please refer to his website nt-associates.com.

Editor's Note

Osprey Publishing is extremely grateful for the assistance of Anton I. Shalito, Ilya Y. Savchenkov, Kirill V. Tysplenkov and Nikolay O. Roginsky in the compilation of Men-at-Arms 464 *World War II Soviet Armed Forces (1)*, MAA 468 *World War II Soviet Armed Forces (2)*, and MAA 469 *World War II Soviet Armed Forces (3)*.

Artist's Note

Readers may care to note that the original paintings from which the colour plates in this book were prepared are available for private sale. All reproduction copyright whatsoever is retained by the Publishers. All enquiries should be addressed to:

Darko Pavlović, Modecova 3, Zagreb 10090, Croatia

The Publishers regret that they can enter into no correspondence upon this matter.

© Osprey Publishing. Access to this book is not digitally restricted. In return, we ask you that you use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. Please don't upload this ebook to a peer-to-peer site, email it to everyone you know, or resell it. Osprey Publishing reserves all rights to its digital content and no part of these products may be copied, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise (except as permitted here), without the written permission of the publisher. Please support our continuing book publishing programme by using this e-book responsibly.

Every effort has been made by the Publisher to secure permissions to use the images in this publication. If there has been any oversight we would be happy to rectify the situation and written submission should be made to Osprey Publishing.